



Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Review



Technical Review Form Page

Application # OR-5030

Peer Reviewer: [Redacted]  
Lead Monitor: [Redacted]  
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**CORE AREAS (A) and (B)**

States must address in their application all of the selection criteria in the Core Areas.

**A. Successful State Systems**

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development</b>	20	20
<p>The extent to which the State has demonstrated past commitment to and investment in high-quality, accessible Early Learning and Development Programs and services for Children with High Needs, as evidenced by the State's--</p> <p>(a) Financial investment, from January 2007 to the present, in Early Learning and Development Programs, including the amount of these investments in relation to the size of the State's population of Children with High Needs during this time period;</p> <p>(b) Increasing, from January 2007 to the present, the number of Children with High Needs participating in Early Learning and Development Programs;</p> <p>(c) Existing early learning and development legislation, policies, or practices; and</p> <p>(d) Current status in key areas that form the building blocks for a high quality early learning and development system, including Early Learning and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, health promotion practices, family engagement strategies, the development of Early Childhood Educators, Kindergarten Entry Assessments, and effective data practices.</p>		

Scoring Rubric Used: Quality

**Comments on (A)(1)**

The applicant documented a history of State commitment to early learning and development as evidenced by significant (and ongoing) financial investment, identified early learning investment milestones (either accomplished or targeted), and the governor's education initiatives. It was reported that the State invested \$721,600,996 in ELD programs for 2007-11, showing, for the most part, an increasing trend for state support although total state contributions show a decline in 2010 and 2011. The CCDF match requirement indicates that the state exceeded it by several million annually. Also indicative of the state's commitment is an implemented quality rating system including supports and incentives, a kindergarten readiness survey, effective data collection systems and family engagement practices. A review of data in the application clearly indicated the increasing trend of Children with High Needs participation in almost all programs. The applicant also demonstrated a legislated commitment to ELDP as evidenced, for example, by the passage of SB 552 (designating the governor as Superintendent of Public Instruction) and SB 248 (establishing full-day kindergartens in all schools). In addition this commitment is further demonstrated by the establishment of an Early Learning Council (ELC) by SB 909. Key policies are also being modified to support a coordinated and integrated system for ELDP; for example the conversion of contracts to outcome and performance agreements, establishing universal outcomes and standards for all state programs, developing an integrated statewide data system, and re-initiating a kindergarten readiness assessment. Some of the innovative building blocks for high quality early learning and development systems that were identified are currently in the planning and/or implementation stages. Examples include Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS), Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA), Comprehensive Assessment Systems (CAS), and Health Promotion Practices. As noted by the applicant the State's ELC intends to consider whether the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework can be used as the foundation for a common set of standards across all early childhood programs (in 2007 the State did create Early Learning Guidelines for children birth through 5). The State is ready to choose a new KEA instrument and develop an assessment process which is scheduled to be piloted in the fall of 2012. Comprehensive assessment systems, currently implemented in Head Start, Early Head Start, State Pre-K, Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education Programs, will expand to universal screening to identify and support Children with High Needs and their families. New Health

Promotion Practices and integrated Data Systems are also in process. The applicant demonstrated a strong past commitment to early learning and development and identified many key areas that are currently being revised and enhanced.

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.</b>	20	17

The extent to which the State clearly articulates a comprehensive early learning and development reform agenda that is ambitious yet achievable, builds on the State's progress to date (as demonstrated in selection criterion (A)(1)), is most likely to result in improved school readiness for Children with High Needs, and includes--

- (a) Ambitious yet achievable goals for improving program quality, improving outcomes for Children with High Needs statewide, and closing the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers;
- (b) An overall summary of the State Plan that clearly articulates how the High-Quality Plans proposed under each selection criterion, when taken together, constitute an effective reform agenda that establishes a clear and credible path toward achieving these goals; and
- (c) A specific rationale that justifies the State's choice to address the selected criteria in each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E), including why these selected criteria will best achieve these goals.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

**Comments on (A)(2)**

The applicant articulated the rationale for its early learning and reform agenda through a detailed State Plan, inclusive of strategies that were designed to enhance statewide early childhood related systems. The comprehensive plan targeted projects and initiatives related to workforce development, kindergarten entry assessments, early learning & development standards, health promotion, TQRIS, and consumer education. These projects and initiatives support 3 broad, over-arching primary goals. However, these 3 important but rather general goals (1. Children enter school ready to learn, 2. Children leave 1st grade meeting established standards for reading 3. State funded services, agencies and structures are integrated to support these goals), may be optimistic and desirable, but do not provide any measurable direction or guidance for improving program quality or services for children with high needs. Applicant further cites several guiding principles for turning this vision into reality yet none of them indicate any specific, measurable goal for achievement in support of improving quality. The applicant does cite 6 specific reform actions to transform the state's early childhood system, 1) shared focus on readiness and reading 2) identifying high need children 3) range of high-quality programs 4) empowering family choice 5) strong accountability and resource allocation with incentive for quality improvement 6) and integrating governance and resources. These all seem likely to positively affect program/services quality and are clearly supported by legislative action (passage of SB 909 establishing both an Education Investment Board and an Early Learning Council) and further supported by the Governor's efforts as noted by the Early Childhood Reform initiative. The applicant also identified 7 important projects for implementing the 12 high-quality RTT plans in a comprehensive and well-articulated manner. The applicant did include specific rationale that justified the State's choice to address selected criteria in each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E).

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State</b>	10	8

The extent to which the State has established, or has a High-Quality Plan to establish, strong participation and commitment in the State Plan by Participating State Agencies and other early learning and development stakeholders by--

- (a) Demonstrating how the Participating State Agencies and other partners, if any, will identify a governance structure for working together that will facilitate interagency coordination, streamline decision making, effectively allocate resources, and create long-term sustainability and describing--
  - (1) The organizational structure for managing the grant and how it builds upon existing interagency governance structures such as children's cabinets, councils, and commissions, if any already exist and are effective;
  - (2) The governance-related roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency, the State Advisory Council, each Participating State Agency, the State's Interagency Coordinating Council for part C of IDEA, and other partners, if any;
  - (3) The method and process for making different types of decisions (e.g., policy, operational) and resolving disputes; and
  - (4) The plan for when and how the State will involve representatives from Participating Programs, Early Childhood Educators or their representatives, parents and families, including parents and families of Children with High Needs, and other key stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the activities carried out under the grant;

(b) Demonstrating that the Participating State Agencies are strongly committed to the State Plan, to the governance structure of the grant, and to effective implementation of the State Plan, by including in the MOU or other binding agreement between the State and each Participating State Agency--

(1) Terms and conditions that reflect a strong commitment to the State Plan by each Participating State Agency, including terms and conditions designed to align and leverage the Participating State Agencies' existing funding to support the State Plan;

(2) "Scope-of-work" descriptions that require each Participating State Agency to implement all applicable portions of the State Plan and a description of efforts to maximize the number of Early Learning and Development Programs that become Participating Programs; and

(3) A signature from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency; and

(c) Demonstrating commitment to the State Plan from a broad group of stakeholders that will assist the State in reaching the ambitious yet achievable goals outlined in response to selection criterion (A)(2)(a), including by obtaining--

(1) Detailed and persuasive letters of intent or support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, and, if applicable, local early learning councils; and

(2) Letters of intent or support from such other stakeholders as Early Childhood Educators or their representatives; the State's legislators; local community leaders; State or local school boards; representatives of private and faith-based early learning programs; other State and local leaders (e.g., business, community, tribal, civil rights, education association leaders); adult education and family literacy State and local leaders; family and community organizations (e.g., parent councils, nonprofit organizations, local foundations, tribal organizations, and community-based organizations); libraries and children's museums; health providers; and postsecondary institutions.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (A)(3)**

The applicant demonstrated a strong plan, that has been partially implemented, and broad systematic elements for aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State. The applicant has recently, through legislation, changed the entire structure for governance, management, and decision making in early childhood education by establishing an Education Investment Board and an Early Learning Council. Further legislation (SB552) also designated the governor as the state's superintendent of public instruction which creates a unique structure for improving education governance and services delivery. The Organizational Chart clearly delineates and defines structure, roles and responsibilities of the various agencies, departments, and other entities involved in this grant. The organizational structure, governance roles and responsibilities, decision making framework, program participation and key stakeholder involvement and engagement strategies, articulated key elements for a high quality plan to establish strong participation and coordination of early learning and development systems. The planned use of focus groups, town hall formats and online opportunities, conducted directly with parents and families to annually review Early Learning services and systems, should maximize their participation and engagement. Also demonstrated was the strong commitment of key stakeholders to the State Plan. Copies of fully executed MOUs for all state agencies including the State Advisory Council on Early Childhood Education and the Coordinating Council for Part C of IDEA are very clear and detailed in describing responsibilities and scope of work for each entity. A substantial collection of some 52 letters of support from a broad range (state agencies to private foundations for example) of stakeholders is included in the application. Each details not only support, but commitment to participate as well as intent to contribute. For example the three tribal council letters indicate specific contributions they would make and an out-of-state foundation notes the willingness to consider a matching grant for one of the specific projects detailed in the plan. The applicant has presented a strong foundation for aligning support and coordination of early learning across the State, with key aspects of the plan currently being development.

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant.</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>

The extent to which the State Plan--

(a) Demonstrates how the State will use existing funds that support early learning and development from Federal, State, private, and local sources (e.g., CCDF, Title I and II of ESEA, IDEA, Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program; State preschool, Head Start Collaboration and State Advisory Council funding; Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program, Title V MCH Block Grant; TANF; Medicaid; child welfare services under Title IV (B) and (E) of the Social Security Act; Statewide Longitudinal Data System; foundation; other private funding sources) for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, including how the quality set-asides in CCDF will be used;

(b) Describes, in both the budget tables and budget narratives, how the State will effectively and efficiently use funding from this grant to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, in a manner that--

(1) Is adequate to support the activities described in the State Plan;

(2) Includes costs that are reasonable and necessary in relation to the objectives, design, and significance of

the activities described in the State Plan and the number of children to be served; and

(3) Details the amount of funds budgeted for Participating State Agencies, localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners, and the specific activities to be implemented with these funds consistent with the State Plan, and demonstrates that a significant amount of funding will be devoted to the local implementation of the State Plan; and

(c) Demonstrates that it can be sustained after the grant period ends to ensure that the number and percentage of Children with High Needs served by Early Learning and Development Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

**Comments on (A)(4)**

The applicant provided budget summary and narrative statements that demonstrated the overall support structure for implementing the State Plan and achieving the associated outcomes. Included was a breakdown of each budget category for each year of the 4-year grant, and concise budget summaries and responsibility statements for each of the participating agencies. Narrative statements provided additional clarifying information demonstrating the overall effectiveness of the use of the funding, and detailed plans for leveraging resources. For the most part budgetary allocations seem reasonable and appropriate. One concern identified is the lack of clarity about sustainability post-grant. Specifically a total of 18.5 FTE's are proposed to be added yet no information documents their future status after the grant period. If any, or all, of the positions are continuing it will be necessary to account for substantial cost factors. Conversely, if none of the positions are to continue it is unclear how the system will function. However, the applicant did state in the narrative that all funding sources (federal, state, local, and private sector) which support ELDP will be under the policy direction of the newly formed Early Learning Council, which will work to maintain the priorities in the plan through strategies including restructuring existing funds and aligning with the newly developed quality infrastructure. Though specific budgetary detail supporting sustainability post-grant is not included in the application, the strategy supports the likelihood of sustaining the reforms inherent in the grant request and demonstrates the intention to use existing funding to support the reform plan. Table A-4 documents the substantial investment to be made by each funding source during the grant period.

**B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs**

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and adopted, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and adopt, a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System that--

(a) Is based on a statewide set of tiered Program Standards that include--

- (1) Early Learning and Development Standards;
- (2) A Comprehensive Assessment System;
- (3) Early Childhood Educator qualifications;
- (4) Family engagement strategies;
- (5) Health promotion practices; and
- (6) Effective data practices;

(b) Is clear and has standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program quality levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards that lead to improved learning outcomes for children; and

(c) Is linked to the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (B)(1)**

The applicant has developed and implemented a statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System which is linked to the State licensing system. Participation in the TQRIS is currently a requirement of all licensed Early Learning and Development programs, including licensed family child care homes. The applicant has developed a newly revised system that includes increased quality indicators and addresses all 6 program standards. The TQRIS standards are measurable and clearly differentiate quality levels. The applicant has also outlined plans to refine and expand incentives and quality grants for programs. The revised five-level TQRIS integrates the State's Early Learning and Development Standards as well as the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, which clearly are demonstrated in the TQRIS Model presented. Family engagement and health promotion practices are also addressed in the revised TQRIS. The applicant also demonstrates the TQRIS link to existing data systems and effective data practices. Also included is a comprehensive assessment system.



Measures for quality adult-child interactions are included in the model presented and accompanying narrative. Though there is a reference in the narrative to environmental program assessment, and Physical Environment is Standard 3 of the Oregon Program Quality document, measures of environmental quality are not specifically addressed on the five-level TQRIS document, or a method for assessing measures of environmental quality through valid and reliable indicators is not referenced.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>

The extent to which the State has maximized, or has a High-Quality Plan to maximize, program participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Implementing effective policies and practices to reach the goal of having all publicly funded Early Learning and Development Programs participate in such a system, including programs in each of the following categories--

- (1) State-funded preschool programs;
- (2) Early Head Start and Head Start programs;
- (3) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA;
- (4) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA; and
- (5) Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program;

(b) Implementing effective policies and practices designed to help more families afford high-quality child care and maintain the supply of high-quality child care in areas with high concentrations of Children with High Needs (e.g., maintaining or increasing subsidy reimbursement rates, taking actions to ensure affordable co-payments, providing incentives to high-quality providers to participate in the subsidy program); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for the numbers and percentages of Early Learning and Development Programs that will participate in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by type of Early Learning and Development Program (as listed in (B)(2)(a)(1) through (5) above).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

#### Comments on (B)(2)

The applicant demonstrated that the State has substantially maximized program participation in the TQRIS by requiring all licensed programs to participate. The State has also set ambitious but achievable goals for significantly increasing participation, most significantly publicly funded early learning and development programs (Head Start and state funding Pre-K programs), in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. The broad array of early care and education partners that designed the TQRIS collaboratively increases the likelihood of broader participation in the system. The applicant provided strong target percentages for participation by other publically funded Early Learning and Development Programs funded by IDEA Part B and C, and Title 1 of ESEA. Though strong target percentages for participation of IDEA Part B and C, Title 1 of ESEA were included, as noted above, specific policies, practices or activities to reach the target percentages were not noted. The narrative indicated that the States' participation in the Federal Monitoring Learning Laboratory will position the Early Learning Council of the State to explore other opportunities to align the TQRIS with those programs towards common learning goals. The applicant also presented examples of effective policies and practices that have led to more families affording quality child care. Examples that have been implemented include increasing family income limits from 150% to 185% of the federal poverty level, increasing payment rates for ELDP significantly, and reducing parent co-payments by an average of 20%, and increasing eligibility periods. Also noted is the use supplemental payment to a provider for serving children with severe physical or mental disabilities. The purpose of which, is to reimburse providers based on additional cost of care that the child requires. One of the key goals identified by the applicant, which includes effective plans for implementation, is the development of policies and practices that support access to high-quality ELDP for families of children with high needs. An identified related implementation step is identifying geographic areas with higher populations of children with high needs for receiving support through regional coaches to enhance quality and support program in moving up the TQRIS tiers.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for rating and monitoring the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Using a valid and reliable tool for monitoring such programs, having trained monitors whose ratings have an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability, and monitoring and rating the Early Learning and Development Programs with appropriate frequency; and

(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs (e.g., displaying quality rating information at the program site) and making program quality rating data, information, and licensing history (including any health and safety violations) publicly available in formats that are easy to understand and use for decision making by families selecting Early Learning and Development Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (b)(5)**

The applicant identified a plan to be implemented for monitoring and rating the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs related to the TQRIS. A triennial monitoring schedule, with built in annual reports that allow on-going as well as periodic monitoring was identified. This plan (including frequency) is both reasonable and achievable. The CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System), which focuses on teacher child interactions, would be used in upper tier monitoring. Trained CLASS observers, who meet the CLASS inter-rater reliability requirements (which is essential to ensure valid rating), would conduct the observations. As noted by the applicant, currently a pool of such observers/monitors is being established. A method for assessing measures of environmental quality through valid and reliable indicators was not referenced. No other specific valid and reliable tool for monitoring was identified. A website has been developed in which parents can access TQRIS information including specific early learning and development programs TQRIS ranking/quality information. TQRIS visual displays, indicating specific quality rating, would also be posted at each early learning and development center. Also identified were goals to implement a consumer education campaign on the importance of quality care and education, and social marketing strategies. The applicant has presented a comprehensive plan, which is partially implemented for building upon and enhancing current practices as noted above. While a formal triennial monitoring schedule with annual report requirements seems reasonable, a valid and reliable method for measuring environmental quality is needed (as referenced above).

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for improving the quality of the Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development Programs to continuously improve (e.g., through training, technical assistance, financial rewards or incentives, higher subsidy reimbursement rates, compensation);

(b) Providing supports to help working families who have Children with High Needs access high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs that meet those needs (e.g., providing full-day, full-year programs; transportation; meals; family support services); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing--

(1) The number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and

(2) The number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (B)(4)**

The applicant has substantially implemented a system for improving the quality of ELDP participating in the TQRIS. The states' TQRIS outlines a clear model for supports and incentives that promote quality advancement including vouchers for educational materials, reduced licensing fees, and increased subsidy reimbursement. The state's Child Care Contribution Tax Credit is another example/system that enables the state to provide supports and incentives for quality improvement of programs and workforce. An online ELDP workforce registry (database) documents and recognizes professional development of ELDP staff, and includes a tiered (steps) system for providing support and incentives. Awards are provided to educators who attain specific education levels on the tiered system. The applicant's plan for promoting quality advancement includes a model for coaching and providing technical assistance, targeting programs that serving large numbers of children with high needs. The plan will provide more support to programs at lower tier levels and more incentives (increased subsidy reimbursement) for programs at higher tier levels. The State has also implemented a number of strategies to help families who have children with high needs access high quality ELDP. Examples include linking families to Head Start/Child Care Subsidy partnership programs that provide full-day full-year services, special contracts that the State provides for services targeting children with disabilities and developmental delays, and children of teen parents completing high school. Another strategy is that providers who serve children with severe physical and mental disabilities may receive supplemental payments as incentives. Incentives are also planned for programs serving children on Indian lands. The use of economic incentives is an effective way to provide both motivation and reward for higher quality performance. Planned family support also includes connecting families of children with high needs to Family Support Managers (single point of contact) for linking families to quality services, which is a known effective strategy. The applicant's past practices integrated with their plans for promoting access to

high quality ELDP for families of children with high needs, provides a solid foundation to facilitate increased access. The applicant has set very ambitious targets for (1) The number of ELD Programs in the top tiers of the TQRIS and (2) The number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in ELD Programs in the top tiers of the TQRIS yet they seem reasonable to achieve given the comprehensive activities detailed in the narrative for producing the targeted results.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(5) Validating the effectiveness of the State Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.</b>	15	15

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to design and implement evaluations--working with an independent evaluator and, when warranted, as part of a cross-State evaluation consortium--of the relationship between the ratings generated by the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and the learning outcomes of children served by the State's Early Learning and Development Programs by--

(a) Validating, using research-based measures, as described in the State Plan (which also describes the criteria that the State used or will use to determine those measures), whether the tiers in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System accurately reflect differential levels of program quality; and

(b) Assessing, using appropriate research designs and measures of progress (as identified in the State Plan), the extent to which changes in quality ratings are related to progress in children's learning, development, and school readiness.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

#### Comments on (B)(5)

The applicant demonstrated a high-quality comprehensive multi-year plan for validating the effectiveness of the State TQRIS. The plan is built on a cyclical model of ongoing evaluation and continuous improvement, to be facilitated by a contracted team of University researchers who are members of a national group of quality evaluators, and other quality related consortiums including the National Child Care Policy Research Consortium. The plan builds on prior evaluation data in which the cyclical model was used, and is impacting the development of enhanced TQRIS standards and tiering. The validation plan will evaluate/validate the tiered ratings in differentiating quality levels, and assess quality ratings in relationship to progress in children's learning, development and kindergarten readiness.

### **Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E)**

Each State must address in its application--

- (1) Two or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (C);
- (2) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D); and
- (3) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E).

The total available points for each Focused Investment Area will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that area, so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points.

#### **C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children**

The total available points that an applicant may receive for selection criteria (C)(1) through (C)(4) is 60. The 60 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address all four selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 15 points. If the applicant chooses to address two selection criteria, each criterion will be worth up to 30 points.

The applicant must address at least two of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.</b>	30	22

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to put in place high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards that are used statewide by Early Learning and Development Programs and that--

(a) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate across each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, and that they cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness;

(b) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics;

(c) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are incorporated in Program

Standards, curricula and activities, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and professional development activities; and

(d) The State has supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to the Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (C)(1)**

The applicant demonstrated a high-quality, partially implemented plan to put in place high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards that are used statewide by ELDP. In 2007, the applicant had developed and adopted ELDS and a companion-training manual that were linked with the states Kindergarten Foundations and the early childhood Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. The new Head Start Child Development Early Learning Framework (which is aligned with the newly adopted National K-12 Common Core State Standards) will replace the ELDS referenced and provide a common set of child outcomes for all early childhood settings/programs throughout the State. The plan includes the identification of 3 Key Goals and the development of a comprehensive implementation plan/timeline with clear activities, rationale, milestones and responsibilities defined. The new Head Start Child Development Early Learning Framework will be embedded into statewide standards and supported in ECE workforce training, and community colleges and other higher education institutions curriculum development. The plan also includes targets for aligning with the K-12 Common Core State Standards; addresses contracting with national experts to align the framework with birth to three standards; and delineates timelines for related policy development, and embedding the framework in the TQRIS. The clearly articulated plan addresses key elements of the selection criteria with the exception of evidence of ELDS incorporated in statewide program curricula and activities, or specific planned strategies or activities that address this.

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.</b>	30	28

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs by--

(a) Establishing a progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety; ensuring that health and behavioral screening and follow-up occur; and promoting children's physical, social, and emotional development across the levels of its Program Standards;

(b) Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained and supported on an on-going basis in meeting the health standards;

(c) Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity; and

(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who--

(1) Are screened using Screening Measures that align with the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment benefit (see section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act) or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (42 CFR 457.520), and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA (see sections 612(a)(3) and 635(a)(5) of IDEA);

(2) Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and where appropriate, received follow-up; and

(3) Participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care, including the number of children who are up to date in a schedule of well-child care.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (C)(3)**

The applicant presented a high-quality plan to identify and address the health, behavioral and development needs of children with high needs. The plan, which has been substantially implemented, identified clear goals, related activities and rationale to support the attainment of each goal. The key goals targeted focus areas included parental and caregiver access to information; expanding and enhancing home visiting programs including pre-post natal programs; increasing rates of screenings at standard intervals (including family risk, health, oral health, and developmental screenings); increasing percentage of high needs children enrolled in the State Health Plan, and related topics. The applicant also established that the State Child Care Division is currently developing higher levels of health standards that are linked to programs participating in the TQRIS. Health and Safety training systems and standards were also identified, including the Oregon Kids Healthy and Safe Handbook and Training System, which incorporates comprehensive information on health and safety standards. Health and safety workshops are also held statewide and are noted to begin with an overview of health and safety practices and standards for ECE which clearly demonstrates methods for increasing the number of EC Educators trained to meet health standards. Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, and expanding physical activity are targeted through statewide initiatives such as the Oregon Moves! Team, and the development of a standardized training curriculum that follows the IMIL (I Am Moving, I Am Learning) model. Also noted are the wide spectrum of



health related partnerships, collaborations and initiatives as a means of leveraging existing resources. Though the plan provides for the identification of developmental and behavioral needs of children through screenings, methods for addressing their needs, including referral and follow-up were minimal. For the most part, ambitious yet achievable statistical targets were set by the applicant, such as percentage increases of children screened for developmental delays at standard intervals, the percentage increases of children with a medical and dental home, and children WIC services.

**D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce**

The total points that a State may earn for selection criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (D), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to--

- (a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children’s learning and development and improve child outcomes;
- (b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and
- (c) Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State’s Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (D)(1)**

The applicant presented a high-quality plan to strengthen and build-upon the current, fully implemented Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework that was designed by an advisory committee that included early learning experts from community colleges and universities, early childhood educators and individuals from related professional associations. The framework is to be used by professionals across the State to guide professional development regarding ten core knowledge categories that align with defined elements outlined in this competition. The plan identifies specific effective activities to build upon the framework to ensure the standards are in alignment with all early childhood education programs/systems in the state, and to increase engagement. Also targeted in the plan are supports in areas of the state that are rural and/or have large concentrations of low income children/families. Important efforts to enhance the seamless progression of credentials, through increased engagement of Community Colleges and Universities, were also outlined. Also noted is the important statewide progression of certificates, credentials and degrees, of which many are stated to be aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework (WKCF). The progression includes Oregon Registry step certificates, credentials including credentials for infant/toddler professionals and directors, AA Degrees, BA Degrees, and advanced degrees. This common progression of certificates, credentials and degrees, that align with the WKCF, clearly supports and streamlines pathways for EC Educators educational and career advancement and increased program quality through higher levels of workforce development.

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to improve the effectiveness and retention of Early Childhood Educators who work with Children with High Needs, with the goal of improving child outcomes by--

- (a) Providing and expanding access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with the State’s Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework;
- (b) Implementing policies and incentives (e.g., scholarships, compensation and wage supplements, tiered reimbursement rates, other financial incentives, management opportunities) that promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and that are designed to increase retention;
- (c) Publicly reporting aggregated data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention; and
- (d) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for--

(1) Increasing the number of postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number of Early Childhood Educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(2) Increasing the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (D)(2)**

The applicant presented a high-quality plan for improving early childhood educators' knowledge, skills and abilities. The plan, which builds upon the current fully implemented system (plan), is targeted to improve the effectiveness and retention of a quality workforce. The current system includes professional development opportunities aligned with the state's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, specific training models/series for ELDP staff. Scholarship opportunities are available to increase professional development opportunities in college coursework, trainings, credentialing costs, etc. It is noted that last year over 1700 scholarships were awarded. Other financial incentives are also awarded related to education/training. Data provided by the applicant demonstrated the significant impact/success of these strategies, evidenced by dramatic increases in staff participation at the higher steps on the Oregon Registry, which also reflects progression to higher level of credentials. The State has also recently implemented an enhanced database, Oregon Registry Online, that will track all EC Educators professional development over time and link to the licensed program in which they work. The strong, comprehensive high-quality plan outlines key goals and related activities that will expand access to professional development opportunities aligned with the framework, increase involvement in the professional development system, establish professional development advisors to increase participation in credentialing and degree systems, and other ambitious targets to support a strong ECE workforce.

**E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress**

The total points an applicant may earn for selection criteria (E)(1) and (E)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (E), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>
<p>The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to implement, independently or as part of a cross-State consortium, a common, statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment that informs instruction and services in the early elementary grades and that--</p> <p>(a) Is aligned with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;</p> <p>(b) Is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for English learners and children with disabilities;</p> <p>(c) Is administered beginning no later than the start of school year 2014-2015 to children entering a public school kindergarten; States may propose a phased implementation plan that forms the basis for broader statewide implementation;</p> <p>(d) Is reported to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and to the early learning data system, if it is separate from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, as permitted under and consistent with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws; and</p> <p>(e) Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources other than those available under this grant, (e.g., with funds available under section 6111 or 6112 of the ESEA).</p>		

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (E)(1)**

The applicant presented a high-quality plan to implement an improved Kindergarten Entry Assessment, state-wide. The state did develop a Kindergarten Readiness Survey which was conducted (at the discretion of each Kindergarten teacher) in 1997, 2000, 2002, 2004 and 2008. It was suspended in the fall of 2010 and a process began for developing a new assessment/survey instrument and related policy. An advisory council was formed and will work to identify an instrument that aligns with the Head Start Child Development Early Learning Framework, which the State will adopt as its early learning development standards, and develop an assessment process. Noted standards for the instrument include an existing instrument with known validity and reliability, and that is appropriate for English learners and children with disabilities. The target date for administering the

assessment at test sites is the fall of 2012, and statewide roll-out in the 2013-2014 school year. The state has received four federal grants to develop its longitudinal data system for reporting the Kindergarten Entry Assessment data. A web-based system has been developed for entry of Kindergarten assessment data that will facilitate reporting to the statewide longitudinal data system. It is noted that significant funding for this well developed assessment project is from other sources than this grant, specifically state legislation (a special purpose allocation). The State has demonstrated a viable plan for enhancing the State's partially implemented system for understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.</b>	20	14

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to enhance the State's existing Statewide Longitudinal Data System or to build or enhance a separate, coordinated, early learning data system that aligns and is interoperable with the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and that either data system--

- (a) Has all of the Essential Data Elements;
- (b) Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs;
- (c) Facilitates the exchange of data among Participating State Agencies by using standard data structures, data formats, and data definitions such as Common Education Data Standards to ensure interoperability among the various levels and types of data;
- (d) Generates information that is timely, relevant, accessible, and easy for Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood Educators to use for continuous improvement and decision making; and
- (e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

#### Comments on (E)(2)

The applicant outlined a quality plan for building an early learning data system. The plan includes creating a comprehensive TQRIS web based data system and coordinating that system with the State Longitudinal Data System. The plan also addresses the linkage of other related data systems such as the state's ECE workforce database (Oregon Registry Online) and the Child Care Regulatory Information System that would generate timely, relevant and accessible information to ELDP, ECE and participating agencies. The applicant does reference uniform data collection and that the TQRIS data system will have a consistent look and feel for data entry, and that the State Data Team will establish the vision, goals and a strategic plan to link existing data systems. Specifics regarding data structures, data formats and definitions to ensure interoperability was said to be ensured by the State Data Team though interoperability could not be ensured during the term of the grant, weakening an otherwise strong plan. The plan did include ensuring compliance with all data systems relevant laws and regulations. And while the plan addressed each of the Essential Data Elements (a) through (g), which is required, some of the specifics within those categories were not mentioned such as (d) whether family demographic information would be tracked, or (f) child suspension and expulsion rates.

	Available	Score
<b>Total Points Available for Selection Criteria</b>	280	242

#### Priorities

##### Competitive Preference Priorities

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</b>	10	3

Competitive Preference Priority 2 is designed to increase the number of children from birth to kindergarten entry who are participating in programs that are governed by the State's licensing system and quality standards, with the goal that all licensed or State-regulated programs will participate. The State will receive points for this priority based on the extent to which the State has in place, or has a High-Quality Plan to implement no later than June 30, 2015--

- (a) A licensing and inspection system that covers all programs that are not otherwise regulated by the State and that regularly care for two or more unrelated children for a fee in a provider setting; provided that if the State exempts programs for reasons other than the number of children cared for, the State may exclude those entities and reviewers will score this priority only on the basis of non-excluded entities; and

(b) A Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System in which all licensed or State-regulated Early Learning and Development Programs participate.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (P)(2)**

The applicant presented a plan to address Priority 2 – Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. The narrative preceding the plan outlined the current licensing and inspection system including the current requirement for ELDP to be licensed when caring for three or more unrelated children in non-related care. The plan outlined steps towards reviewing, seeking key stakeholders input and drafting legislation regarding recommended licensing regulation revisions, including changing the licensing requirement for ELDP when caring for three or more unrelated children in non-related care, to two or more. The two or more unrelated children reference is a Selection Criteria requirement for Competitive Priority 2. The applicants' key goal was identified as creating a licensing and inspection system that covers all ELDP that are not otherwise regulated by the State and that regularly care for two or more unrelated children for a fee in a provider setting. Some of what was noted in the narrative brought into question the feasibility of the key goal having a high probability of successful implementation. For example, in the implementation narrative following the goal statement the applicant notes that "given the importance of early childhood and proposed legislative changes with statewide impact, the state will work to understand the "temperature" of the state on the issues related to changing the licensing threshold. Stakeholder meetings and workgroups across geographic areas, both urban and rural, are needed" These statements, and other related statements embedded in the narrative, brought into question the likelihood of a "high" probability of implementation, which is required for Competitive Priority 2.

Priorities

	Available	Yes/No
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry</b>	<b>0 or 10</b>	<b>Yes</b>

To meet this priority, the State must, in its application--

(a) Demonstrate that it has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1) by indicating that all elements in Status Table (A)(1)-12 are met; or

(b) Address selection criterion (E)(1) and earn a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.

**Comments on (P)(3)**

Applicant provided a clear description of the status of children's learning and development at Kindergarten entry in the response to E-1 and earned 80% (16/20 of points possible)

Absolute Priority

	Met? Yes/No
<b>Absolute Priority - Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.</b>	<b>Yes</b>

To meet this priority, the State's application must comprehensively and coherently address how the State will build a system that increases the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

The State's application must demonstrate how it will improve the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs by integrating and aligning resources and policies across Participating State Agencies and by designing and implementing a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. In addition, to achieve the necessary reforms, the State must make strategic improvements in those specific reform areas that will most significantly improve program quality and outcomes for Children with High Needs. Therefore, the State must address those criteria from within each of the Focused Investment Areas (sections (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children, (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce, and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress) that it believes will best prepare its Children with High Needs for kindergarten success.

**Comments on Absolute Priority**



The applicant has presented a coherent comprehensive plan for promoting school readiness for children with high needs, identifying kindergarten readiness and linking appropriate services to ensure that children enter kindergarten ready to succeed. The establishment of an Education Investment Board and an Early Learning Council provides for the integration and alignment of resources and policies across Participating State Agencies. The plan calls for a uniform assessment tool, a comprehensive TQRIS, and provides for consistent data reporting and analysis. Critical strategic actions (staff training and stakeholder involvement especially) planned will ensure both buy-in and full implementation of the plan which the applicant believes will best prepare its Children with High Needs for kindergarten success



# Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Review



## Technical Review Form Page

Application # OR-5030

Peer Reviewer: [Redacted]  
Lead Monitor: [Redacted]  
Support Monitor: [Redacted]  
Application Status: **Reviewed**  
Date/Time: 11/17/2011 - 1:16 PM

### CORE AREAS (A) and (B)

States must address in their application all of the selection criteria in the Core Areas.

#### A. Successful State Systems

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development</b>	20	20
<p>The extent to which the State has demonstrated past commitment to and investment in high-quality, accessible Early Learning and Development Programs and services for Children with High Needs, as evidenced by the State's--</p> <p>(a) Financial investment, from January 2007 to the present, in Early Learning and Development Programs, including the amount of these investments in relation to the size of the State's population of Children with High Needs during this time period;</p> <p>(b) Increasing, from January 2007 to the present, the number of Children with High Needs participating in Early Learning and Development Programs;</p> <p>(c) Existing early learning and development legislation, policies, or practices; and</p> <p>(d) Current status in key areas that form the building blocks for a high quality early learning and development system, including Early Learning and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, health promotion practices, family engagement strategies, the development of Early Childhood Educators, Kindergarten Entry Assessments, and effective data practices.</p>		

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

#### Comments on (A)(1)

The State of Oregon has demonstrated a long standing commitment and investment to providing services for children with high needs as evidenced through the amount of dollars committed along with the creative use of multiple funding sources, including creating an innovative approach to access funds to be utilized for this purpose (Portland Children's Levy). This innovative approach could be considered a strength in supporting early learning. State funded Pre-K and supplemental funding to Head Start and Early Head Start, Special Education Services, CCDF & CCDF match have increased each year respectively over the past 5 years relative to the size of the population presented in need. Other examples include, Child Care contribution tax credits along with state contributions that have funded 15 relief nurseries. With 47.4% (112,757) of the states Early Learning population coming from low-income families, dollars appropriated for Early Learning Development Programs have been used to reach children with high needs in this state. Overall support of the Governor and State Legislature was provided as evidenced by the dollars appropriated and passage of legislation restoring 606 slots that were previously lost. A commitment and strong support for early learning was provided. (b) State funded Pre-K, HS & EHS, Part B & C, Title I, CCDF, Home Visiting, Portland Children's Levy, and Relief Nurseries all showed increases in participation rates through the 5 years reported 2007-2011. It was also noted that it was ESTIMATED that with the expansion efforts and new policies proposed roughly half of the 112,757 children could benefit from receiving services which is a significant number of high needs children who would receive services. (c) Three recent Senate bills: Bill 909 established the Early Learning Council, Bill 552 designating the Governor as the State Superintendent, and Bill 248 establishing all day Kindergarten, and house Bill 2116 Oregon Healthy Kids. Converting current contracts to outcome and performance based agreements shows a commitment toward quality and accountability in programs. Cuts made to recent budgets have been reversed reinforcing commitment. A strong commitment by the Governor is a strength for the early learning program. The Governor will be able to influence policy related to early learning programs in the state. (d) The Early Learning Guidelines were created in 2007 for children birth-5. The Early Learning Council will be considering adopting the HS Child Development and Early Learning Framework currently used by all HS programs. The framework will serve as a foundation for a common set of standards across programs. The framework is a basis for targeting domain areas associated with

school readiness. Adoption of this framework is a positive step in recognizing the fundamental work of HS and linking it to the states current system. Comprehensive screenings are being used across programs, however only early intervention/early childhood special education are inputting data on kids. The reform agenda calls for universal screening. Health promotion practices through HB2116 provide the unique opportunity to strengthen the role of health and human services in achieving the early learning goals. The TQRIS system promotes family engagement from parents having access to their children in the early childhood settings while they are in care, encouraging family participation, parent feedback, and helping parent's access community supports. The Oregon Center for career development promotes participation for professionals to be part of the professional registry the state promotes and/or facilitates development of early childhood professionals. This information is linked to the facilities in which the professionals work. The state has currently suspended the use of the Kindergarten Entry Assessment in 2010. The state recognized the limitations of the assessment and made the decision to suspend use. This too, shows a commitment to early learning as the state works to develop an alternative assessment tool. They have not chosen a new assessment, but project piloting one in 2012. There are currently some effective data practices that capture data at the program and teacher levels. Progress is being made toward establishing the capability to track individual child outcomes. Oregon has created a quality plan in advancing the state early childhood agenda. Oregon has demonstrated a high level of commitment to Early Learning as outlined in this response.

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.</b>	20	16

The extent to which the State clearly articulates a comprehensive early learning and development reform agenda that is ambitious yet achievable, builds on the State's progress to date (as demonstrated in selection criterion (A)(1)), is most likely to result in improved school readiness for Children with High Needs, and includes--

(a) Ambitious yet achievable goals for improving program quality, improving outcomes for Children with High Needs statewide, and closing the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers;

(b) An overall summary of the State Plan that clearly articulates how the High-Quality Plans proposed under each selection criterion, when taken together, constitute an effective reform agenda that establishes a clear and credible path toward achieving these goals; and

(c) A specific rationale that justifies the State's choice to address the selected criteria in each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E), including why these selected criteria will best achieve these goals.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

#### Comments on (A)(2)

(a) Goals are presented for improving the quality of programs. These goals will be difficult to measure. These goals include Children entering school ready to learn, having children leave first grade meeting established standards for reading, and integrating services, agencies, and structures to support these goals. Children entering school ready to learn is a general goal and one that is not supported with an assessment measure. However, there are some good guiding principles described throughout the proposal. Recognizing the value of social emotional development and integrating services for high needs children will aid in creating a foundation for children's future learning. (b) The state has an ambitious plan consisting of 7 projects that need to be implemented as part of the overall mission. The state plan has prioritized the elements of this plan which includes the following; TQRIS, common standards, building capacity (health promotion), building capacity (early childhood workforce), strong Kindergarten entry system, data system, and consumer education. All of these elements comprise a high quality plan toward strengthening and moving forward the reform agenda of a quality early childhood state program. The plan is ambitious and difficult to assess as there are not measures provided to assess the success of goal attainment. (c) The selected criteria that Oregon has chosen to focus on have resulted in reflecting on the Whole System and not one particular area. The state has chosen to refine the current standards that were discontinued with the intent to have a common set of standards across all learning programs which reinforces the commitment to quality. Also, a universal and systemic approach to early identification of health, behavioral, and development needs of high risk children is being proposed. (D1) Oregon has begun the process of creating a system that has developed a work force knowledge and competency framework that is currently used by the early childhood field. A plan is being presented to further establish one common workforce knowledge base. (D2) Expansion of the ECE registry, research based professional development, and supporting recruitment and retention through incentive and career pathways. (E1) Current Kindergarten Entry assessment was suspended in 2010 as the state questioned reliability and validity. Creating a statewide comprehensive kindergarten entry assessment is a component of this state plan. By creating an infrastructure it would support the release of the new assessment scheduled for 2012. (E2) The statutory and coordinated governance along with reform will aid Oregon in the creation of an integrated early learning data system. The selected criteria presented will move the state toward their stated goals. The criteria presented are a thoughtful reflection of how the parts will be integrated into achieving the stated goals. The state was able to articulate the importance of early childhood education and a strength was the current position of the Governor and the influence that may be gained from this position.

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State</b>	10	9

The extent to which the State has established, or has a High-Quality Plan to establish, strong participation and commitment in the State Plan by Participating State Agencies and other early learning and development stakeholders by--

(a) Demonstrating how the Participating State Agencies and other partners, if any, will identify a governance structure for working together that will facilitate interagency coordination, streamline decision making, effectively allocate resources, and create long-term sustainability and describing--

(1) The organizational structure for managing the grant and how it builds upon existing interagency governance structures such as children's cabinets, councils, and commissions, if any already exist and are effective;

(2) The governance-related roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency, the State Advisory Council, each Participating State Agency, the State's Interagency Coordinating Council for part C of IDEA, and other partners, if any;

(3) The method and process for making different types of decisions (e.g., policy, operational) and resolving disputes, and

(4) The plan for when and how the State will involve representatives from Participating Programs, Early Childhood Educators or their representatives, parents and families, including parents and families of Children with High Needs, and other key stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the activities carried out under the grant.

(b) Demonstrating that the Participating State Agencies are strongly committed to the State Plan, to the governance structure of the grant, and to effective implementation of the State Plan, by including in the MOU or other binding agreement between the State and each Participating State Agency--

(1) Terms and conditions that reflect a strong commitment to the State Plan by each Participating State Agency, including terms and conditions designed to align and leverage the Participating State Agencies' existing funding to support the State Plan;

(2) "Scope-of-work" descriptions that require each Participating State Agency to implement all applicable portions of the State Plan and a description of efforts to maximize the number of Early Learning and Development Programs that become Participating Programs; and

(3) A signature from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency; and

(c) Demonstrating commitment to the State Plan from a broad group of stakeholders that will assist the State in reaching the ambitious yet achievable goals outlined in response to selection criterion (A)(2)(a), including by obtaining--

(1) Detailed and persuasive letters of intent or support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, and, if applicable, local early learning councils; and

(2) Letters of intent or support from such other stakeholders as Early Childhood Educators or their representatives; the State's legislators; local community leaders; State or local school boards; representatives of private and faith-based early learning programs; other State and local leaders (e.g., business, community, tribal, civil rights, education association leaders); adult education and family literacy State and local leaders; family and community organizations (e.g., parent councils, nonprofit organizations, local foundations, tribal organizations, and community-based organizations); libraries and children's museums; health providers; and postsecondary institutions.

#### Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

#### Comments on (A)(3)

(a) The Governance structure was codified into law in 2011 by the Oregon Legislature. The Governor was named the Superintendent of Public Instruction and also created the Oregon Education Investment Board which also oversees the Early Learning Council. Department of Human Services is Lead Agency. The Early Learning Council serves as a "Children's Cabinet" to merge, eliminate, and consolidate the many Governance and policy bodies. Policy and operation decisions affecting the children covered under part C of IDEA will be closely coordinated with the Inter-agency Council, stakeholders, and professionals across Oregon. This current Governance structure starts with the commitment of the governor and includes stakeholders across various agencies. The involvement of these various agencies lay the foundation for the program infrastructure and ownership of the early learning reform agenda. The goals outlined will require the agencies to work together as systems become integrated. This method of top down governance creates the structure that will support the plan outlined in the proposal. (3) Policy decisions will be made by the Early Learning Council; operational decisions will be made by the Early Childhood System Director. The Governor's existing authority as state CEO, along with the commitments codified in Memoranda of Understanding and Dispute resolution within state government will occur within the executive branch under the authority of the Governor and the Early Learning Council. (4) The Early Learning Council will engage in a broad reaching and aggressive community and stakeholder engagement strategy to inform the design, delivery, and continuous improvement of a high quality and innovative state system. An annual, public review of Early Learning services and systems will be conducted directly with parents and families of Children with High Needs using focus group, town hall formats and online opportunities. Use of these multiple venues will ensure maximum communication and reflect different styles and comfort levels in public conversation and engagement. (B) (1-3) Includes 7 MOU's from agencies and Departments needed to carry out mission. The MOU's contain, terms and conditions designed to align and leverage the Participating State Agencies' existing



funding to support the State Plan; "Scope-of-work" descriptions for each Participating State Agency to implement all applicable portions of the State Plan with a description of efforts that maximize the number of Early Learning and Development Programs; included is also a signature from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency. (C) (1-2) Included in the appendix are Detailed and persuasive letters of intent or support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, local early learning councils, and numerous Letters of Intent or support from such other stakeholders as Early Childhood Educators or their representatives; the State's legislators; local community leaders; State or local school boards; representatives of private and faith-based early learning programs; other State and local leaders (e.g., business, community, tribal, civil rights, education association leaders); adult education and family literacy State and local leaders; family and community organizations (e.g., parent councils, nonprofit organizations, local foundations, tribal organizations, and community-based organizations); libraries and children's museums; health providers; and postsecondary institutions.

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant.</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>

The extent to which the State Plan--

(a) Demonstrates how the State will use existing funds that support early learning and development from Federal, State, private, and local sources (e.g., CCDF; Title I and II of ESEA; IDEA; Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program; State preschool; Head Start Collaboration and State Advisory Council funding; Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program; Title V MCH Block Grant; TANF; Medicaid; child welfare services under Title IV (B) and (E) of the Social Security Act; Statewide Longitudinal Data System; foundation; other private funding sources) for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, including how the quality set-asides in CCDF will be used;

(b) Describes, in both the budget tables and budget narratives, how the State will effectively and efficiently use funding from this grant to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, in a manner that--

- (1) Is adequate to support the activities described in the State Plan;
- (2) Includes costs that are reasonable and necessary in relation to the objectives, design, and significance of the activities described in the State Plan and the number of children to be served; and
- (3) Details the amount of funds budgeted for Participating State Agencies, localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners, and the specific activities to be implemented with these funds consistent with the State Plan, and demonstrates that a significant amount of funding will be devoted to the local implementation of the State Plan; and

(c) Demonstrates that it can be sustained after the grant period ends to ensure that the number and percentage of Children with High Needs served by Early Learning and Development Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

**Comments on (A)(4)**

(a) Tables listing the dollars to be used to help achieve the state plan are included. The newly created Early Learning Council (ELC) is currently reviewing how to merge and further integrate the coordination of programs. By including the listed funding sources and the programs they support in one policy discussion, families can be expected to experience consistent and efficient service delivery. This will promote and facilitate the state plan toward integration of their quality early learning system. Under the direction of the ELC, resources will be used to support the state plan. It is noted that a four year commitment has been made from the state general fund for a total of \$549,272,677 for the four year period. This commitment from the state general revenue budget will work to support the proposed plan when integrated in with the RTT-ELC dollars. Quality set asides will also be used for supporting increased workforce skills and professional development; environmental improvements of child care facilities; improved collection, analysis and access to child care data; technology for improved access to child care information and training; and consumer education and quality referrals for working families. Specific investments include: expanding the Oregon Registry (a provider professional development system) and developing specialized credentials; developing and providing access to higher level of training for ECE; regionalizing child care resource and referral services to better serve communities; making technological improvements to increase access to training and consumer education information; and increasing access to training for family, friend and neighbor care. (b-1-2) Oregon has identified and engaged the following state agencies to carry out the state plan, they include: Early learning Council, Employment Department, department of Human Services, Department of Education, Oregon Health Authority. All of the funds described throughout the budget and budget narrative appear to be adequate in support of the activities outlined in the state plan. For example, included in the contractual line item for the Early Learning Council was 6.5 million for social marketing firm services. These dollars will be key in creating a campaign to reach the desired population. Also worth noting was the use of private funding to support the development of a Kindergarten entry Assessment. (3) Good detail for the amount of funds budgeted for Participating State Agencies, localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners, and the specific activities to be implemented with these funds consistent with the State Plan. It demonstrated that a significant amount of funding will be devoted to the local implementation of the State Plan. (c) By choosing to focus on structure, governance and organization, the State will expand quality and access. The creation of the ELC will aid in the retention of early learning services and the leverage of funds beyond the RTT grant. The grant dollars will be used to strengthen the infrastructure and will support the amount of early learning dollars already invested by the state for Early learning.

**B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs**

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and adopted, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and adopt, a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System that--

(a) Is based on a statewide set of tiered Program Standards that include--

- (1) Early Learning and Development Standards;
- (2) A Comprehensive Assessment System;
- (3) Early Childhood Educator qualifications;
- (4) Family engagement strategies;
- (5) Health promotion practices; and
- (6) Effective data practices;

(b) Is clear and has standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program quality levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards that lead to improved learning outcomes for children; and

(c) Is linked to the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (B)(1)**

(a)The state currently has a 3 tiered rating system and is proposing to add 2 tiers with the RTT funding. The TQRIS is based on a set of statewide program standards that include; Early Learning and Development Standards;Comprehensive Assessment System (not defined); Early Childhood Educator qualifications; Family engagement strategies; Health promotion practices; and Effective data practices. Development of this system will enable the applicant to raise quality standards for programs and assess their effectiveness through a monitoring protocol. (b)Currently integrating structural indicators of quality that have been developed over the past six years into standards that will become a comprehensive set of TQRIS standards. They are in the process of defining these indicators of quality poised to roll out in 2012. The TQRIS tiers are designed to provide attainable and incremental movement for programs and reflect high expectations that lead to improved learning outcomes for children. Work is also helping to align differing monitoring standards through programs. The upper tiers will aid in improved systems and learning outcomes for children through the quality proposed throughout programs. (c)Licensed child care rules are currently being revised and the state participated in a federal project focused on aligning monitoring standards. Currently some ELDPs are monitored by others outside of the licensing agency, for example Head Start triennial reviews. Good quality response that is achievable and thoughtful in reaching program quality and indicators. However, not fully implemented yet a High Quality plan presented.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>

The extent to which the State has maximized, or has a High-Quality Plan to maximize, program participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Implementing effective policies and practices to reach the goal of having all publicly funded Early Learning and Development Programs participate in such a system, including programs in each of the following categories--

- (1) State-funded preschool programs;
- (2) Early Head Start and Head Start programs;
- (3) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA;
- (4) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA; and
- (5) Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program;

(b) Implementing effective policies and practices designed to help more families afford high-quality child care and maintain the supply of high-quality child care in areas with high concentrations of Children with High Needs (e.g., maintaining or increasing subsidy reimbursement rates, taking actions to ensure affordable co-payments,

providing incentives to high-quality providers to participate in the subsidy program); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for the numbers and percentages of Early Learning and Development Programs that will participate in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by type of Early Learning and Development Program (as listed in (B)(2)(a)(1) through (5) above).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (B)(2)**

(a)The applicant will promote participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by proposing two strategies to maximize program participation; Statewide implementation of the quality indicators project, and alignment of Head Start Performance Standards with the state program of quality standards. These two strategies will align programs across the state. Much of this information was gathered from the current licensing system that reinforced the need to expand the program beyond current licensed programs. Incentives and supports are used to encourage participation across program options including scholarships, and education awards as well as technical assistance. State Pre-K, Head Start are included in the system and the Head Start performance Standards are being utilized to inform the indicators of the system. The ELC continues to explore inclusion of other entities such as IDEA, Part B/C, Title I, and some programs from the state CCDF program. These strategies recognize the distinct needs of programs and will provide opportunities to promote participation in the state TQRIS. (b)The Oregon commission for child care has been proactive to the needs of families using subsidized care. Income limits for eligibility rose from 150% of the Federal poverty level to 185%, and also reducing co-pays for families by an average of 20%. The agency also reimburses providers for caring for children with special needs. By providing increased subsidies for children with high needs and raising the level of eligibility this will ensure that children with high needs will have ample opportunity to participate. Increasing subsidies and elevating eligibility will promote increased participation within the system. (c)Targets set for participation in the TQRIS system include 100% participation by 2 of the 3 largest providers-HS/EHS state Pre-K 264, State licensed (4661) Programs relieving CCDF funds (6741 at 50%). The targets presented are ambitious but may be difficult to realize within the current time frame. The participation by the 2 largest providers is already required by the state; The challenge will be including the programs that are not currently participating. The plan is not fully implemented.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs</b>	15	12

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for rating and monitoring the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Using a valid and reliable tool for monitoring such programs, having trained monitors whose ratings have an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability, and monitoring and rating the Early Learning and Development Programs with appropriate frequency; and

(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs (e.g., displaying quality rating information at the program site) and making program quality rating data, information, and licensing history (including any health and safety violations) publicly available in formats that are easy to understand and use for decision making by families selecting Early Learning and Development Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (B)(3)**

(a)The education of the ECE workforce is currently 100% documented in the state Child Care Regulator Information System. State licensing reps collect structural data to be used, plus a plan is in place to implement a pool of regulators who are trained in the CLASS to assess programs, however this is not yet fully operational. Triennial reviews will be used to measure quality, which will be supplemented with annual reports. The high quality plan documents how the programs will be monitored under the TQRIS using the portfolio process which are screened by teams of educational specialists who have successfully met inter-rater reliability criteria. (b) Oregon has built a website through which parents can access TQRIS information. The site is linked with the state's child care resource and referral child care search process so parents can easily understand the quality of ELDP when making care and education decisions. Oregon intends to use a parental needs assessment to be the driving force toward the framework of social marketing and then apply them to the state's quality efforts. Translated into the context of families and the TQRIS, Oregon intends to launch a broad social marketing campaign to tap into parents' common interest around ensuring their children are ready for Kindergarten. Programs currently are required to visually display licensing information in all licensed ELDP, with plans to require the display of licensing as well as TQRIS information in all licensed ELDP. The current process is not fully implemented however a high quality plan is presented.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs</b>	20	18

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for improving the quality of the Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development Programs to continuously improve (e.g., through training, technical assistance, financial rewards or incentives, higher subsidy reimbursement rates, compensation);

(b) Providing supports to help working families who have Children with High Needs access high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs that meet those needs (e.g., providing full-day, full-year programs; transportation; meals; family support services); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing--

(1) The number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and

(2) The number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (B)(4)**

(a) A coaching model of technical assistance for continuous quality improvement has been designed to provide regional support to programs and begins with a self-assessment based on the indicators of quality on the TQRIS. By providing this outreach to programs, programs will have the basis for developing a Quality Improvement Plan leading to receipt of needed resources to support improvements. This type of model can be effective in moving ELDP's toward continuous improvement. Outreach will be targeted to programs serving large numbers of Children with High Needs, and they will receive priority in receiving support. How this outreach will actually occur has not been presented. The applicant intends to align its child care subsidies and supports with incentives that will raise ELDPs from low to high tiers of quality, and that support the educational development of Children with High Needs. The Early Learning Council will oversee alignment of policy, including accountability of funds across agencies in the State. By creating a statewide Help Line to provide general technical assistance this will support all ELDPs working to progress in the TQRIS. A statewide Help Line will assist with the state's anticipated large volume of requests during the first three years. While this support is available for all programs participating in the TQRIS, specialized and targeted supports will be available to programs as they move into the 3-, 4- and 5- star tiers. (b) One strategy included connecting low-income children with the comprehensive services provided by Head Start. Second, in 2001, the state's child care subsidy program has partnered with Head Start program to provide full day/full year child care services for subsidy-eligible families. These contracted slots allow for full day/full year wraparound care that provides stable, high quality child care and comprehensive services. From 2005-2010, the average number of low-income children benefiting from these full day/full year slots was 400, including infant and toddler care and care for special needs children. Third, children in foster care are eligible for the state's Pre-K/Head Start and Early Head Start. A recent study found that almost half of children ages 3-5 in foster care were enrolled in Oregon Pre-K. In addition, Oregon required child welfare case workers to refer child victims under the age of three to quality early education programs and provides a variety of other key family supports including assistance in travel arrangements for children's health appointments and one-on-one consultation on health issues. These creative supports help families with children with high needs access services. (c) The first target was to increase the number of ELDP in the top tiers of the TQRIS with a five-year goal of having 30% of all programs in the top three tiers, 30 % of programs making a "Commitment to Quality" with the remaining 40% representing new, licensed programs coming into the system. In 2013 Oregon expects an initial surge of ELDP progressing from the Foundational tier of licensing to a level demonstrating a "Commitment to Quality" and expects Oregon Pre-K/Head Start and Migrant Head Start Programs to place into the upper tiers. (c2) The goal is that over 20,000 children will be participating in high quality programs as evidenced by the ELDP documented level in TQRIS. The targets set for increasing participation are ambitious and achievable given the information presented in the High Quality Plan. Currently the program is substantially operational but not fully implemented.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(5) Validating the effectiveness of the State Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to design and implement evaluations--working with an independent evaluator and, when warranted, as part of a cross-State evaluation consortium--of the relationship between the ratings generated by the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and the learning outcomes of children served by the State's Early Learning and Development Programs by--

(a) Validating, using research-based measures, as described in the State Plan (which also describes the criteria that the State used or will use to determine those measures), whether the tiers in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System accurately reflect differential levels of program quality; and

(b) Assessing, using appropriate research designs and measures of progress (as identified in the State Plan), the extent to which changes in quality ratings are related to progress in children's learning, development, and school readiness.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**



**Comments on (B)(5)**

(a) The High Quality Plan for the validation and evaluation of the TQRIS is built upon a cyclical model of ongoing evaluation and continuous improvement. A contracted team of University researchers will: (1) have expertise in evaluation of child care programs and policies, (2) conduct academic research on the development of Children with High Needs within the context of early childhood education, and (3) be active members of a national group of QRIS evaluators, the Quality Initiatives Research and Evaluation Consortium (INQUIRE) and the National Child Care Policy Research Consortium. Research questions involve: To what extent do tiered quality ratings at the program-level differentiate observed quality of educator-child interactions at the classroom-level? What refinement of the TQRIS standards (e.g. regarding professional development of individual educators within programs) is necessary to maximize confidence that the quality ratings differentiate quality of educator-child interactions? At what level of refinement do the quality ratings predict observed quality of educator-child interactions? Are more or fewer than five tiers needed to ensure confidence that the quality ratings differentiate quality and are likely to be associated with differences in children's development and learning in Part B of the validation? Do the quality ratings differentiate quality equivalently for various types of ELDP and classroom age-groups? If not, what revisions are necessary so that they do? Which components of the TQRIS differentiate programs most effectively in terms of observed quality of educator-child interactions? How can these components be weighted in the tiering process to maximize confidence that the tiers differentiate quality? Based on the design and plan, the current research questions will effectively be able to evaluate how programs are meeting the states prescribed outcomes and how these outcomes are related to a programs TQRIS rating. (b) The purpose of the second validation study is to assess the extent to which TQRIS successfully promotes improvements in quality that are sufficient to move programs up in the tiered quality ratings, and to in turn enhance educator-child interactions and family involvement in children's ELDP that promote children's learning, development, and school readiness. Proven research designs, stratified random sample, parent surveys, Hierarchical Linear Modeling, will be used to assess validation. This second validation will include information gathered from parents so that information can be provided in an effort to improve parents knowledge of quality programs. This strategy coupled with information related to the children will strengthen the quality of the research in effectively impacting policy.

**Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E)**

Each State must address in its application—

- (1) Two or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (C);
- (2) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D), and
- (3) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E)

The total available points for each Focused Investment Area will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that area, so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points.

**C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children**

The total available points that an applicant may receive for selection criteria (C)(1) through (C)(4) is 60. The 60 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address all four selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 15 points. If the applicant chooses to address two selection criteria, each criterion will be worth up to 30 points.

The applicant must address at least two of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.</b>	30	22
<p>The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to put in place high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards that are used statewide by Early Learning and Development Programs and that--</p> <p>(a) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate across each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, and that they cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness;</p> <p>(b) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics;</p> <p>(c) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are incorporated in Program Standards, curricula and activities, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and professional development activities; and</p> <p>(d) The State has supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to the Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs.</p>		
Scoring Rubric Used: <b>Quality and Implementation</b>		
<b>Comments on (C)(1)</b>		

(a) In 2007, Oregon developed Early Learning and Development Standards, Birth to Five Early Childhood Foundations (ECFs), and a companion-training manual, Born to Learn. Both were cross-walked/linked with the Oregon Kindergarten Foundations (K-12 Common Curriculum Goals and Content Standards) and the early childhood Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. There are plans to contract with national experts to revise Birth to Three Standards to ensure alignment with the HSCD Early Learning Framework. A National consultant reviewed the ECFs for essential domains and developmentally appropriate content. The ECFs are developmentally appropriate and address the following eight essential domains: (1) Social/Emotional Development; (2) Approaches to Learning; (3) Physical Education and Health; (4) Language and Literacy Development; (5) Mathematics; (6) Science; (7) Social Science; (8) The Arts. Further, Oregon plans to adopt the Head Start Child Development Early Learning Framework for all three- to five-year-old children in all settings across the State. The HSCD Early Learning Framework has proven to be developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate. The framework materials address developmental domains within the framework, curriculum and assessment, dual language learners and children with disabilities. The standards are developmentally appropriate, as well as linguistically and culturally appropriate. Work is planned to ensure they are aligned with the National K-12 Common Core State Standards as adopted (b) The Oregon Board of Education has adopted the National K-12 Common Core State Standards. In test of alignment a crosswalk was completed with the Head Start Child Development Early Learning Framework in the two domains of mathematics and literacy that found significant alignment. Further, Oregon will contract for completion of a formal alignment between the HSCD Early Learning Framework and the K-12 Common Core State Standards. Based on the plan work will be done to ensure the standards align. (c) There are plans in place to incorporate the Early Learning and Development Standards in the program standards as well as curricula and activities, Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. They are currently linked to Comprehensive Assessment Systems, and professional development activities. The HS Performance standards were adopted in 1987 and adopted into the state Pre-K program. The plan outlines how incorporating the standards across the programs listed above. (d) There currently are training and technical assistance opportunities available to ECE's through established Child Care Resource and Referral System that expands statewide. Head Start programs also receive Technical assistance as well, which is not inclusive of all ELDP's. A good vision for alignment of standards across all ELDP's is presented however not substantially or fully implemented.

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs by--

(a) Establishing a progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety; ensuring that health and behavioral screening and follow-up occur; and promoting children's physical, social, and emotional development across the levels of its Program Standards;

(b) Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained and supported on an on-going basis in meeting the health standards;

(c) Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity; and

(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who--

(1) Are screened using Screening Measures that align with the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment benefit (see section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act) or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (42 CFR 457.520), and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA (see sections 612(a)(3) and 635(a)(5) of IDEA);

(2) Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and where appropriate, received follow-up; and

(3) Participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care, including the number of children who are up to date in a schedule of well-child care.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

#### Comments on (C)(3)

(a) The Oregon Employment Department, Child Care Division is currently developing higher levels of health standards for facilities and home-based programs participating in the TQRIS; however, the state has health and safety regulations for child care programs regulated by local environmental health specialists who conduct health and safety inspections for certified child care centers and homes. Licensing of these facilities requires that facilities and programs pass this inspection. The state nutrition plan includes addressing child care strategies for healthy eating, physical activity, screen time reductions and support for breast feeding with several initiatives focusing specifically on obesity prevention in the state. Recent recommendations for use of standardized developmental, behavioral, and health/sensory screening were made in June of 2011, but not yet adopted. There are some elements in place to address the listed needs but lack implementation of the standardized screenings. The applicant has identified and presents a plan to address health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness. (b) A benchmark of 5% each year has been set for increasing the ECE staff that are trained in Health standards. The 5% benchmark is a realistic and achievable goal based on the plan. (c) Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity are activities that are integrated throughout the plan. The plan will rely on current programs (i.e., WIC) to aid in

identification and promote healthy lifestyle alternatives to high need families. (d) Oregon's Medicaid/SCHIP Program will continue to be a significant resource in covering the cost of health, behavioral health, and developmental screening for Children with High Needs through a variety of primary care settings. Ongoing system development efforts including START (screening tools and referral training) and quality improvement projects such as the ABCDIII (national academy of state health policy) initiative and Oregon Pediatric Improvement Partnership will develop capacity among parents, and the health, child welfare, and early care and education workforce to routinely conduct developmental screenings. The state will also leverage its emerging Health Information Technology (HIT) to accelerate the ability to realize important child development goals. Currently, public insurance programs and health providers are embarking on an extensive transformation to meet three aims – cost reduction, improved quality, and engaged patient, family, and community. One strategy proposed to increase reach includes clinics and providers becoming certified as a Patient Centered Primary Care Home. This will increase the reach to a more diverse population in need of services. They will receive enhanced reimbursement for preventive care and for improvement of core measures. Ambitious targets will be achievable with the proposed collaboration of various health agencies. Measures already in place and those proposed will effectively address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of high needs children. This process is not fully implemented.

#### D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

The total points that a State may earn for selection criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (D), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.</b>	20	20

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to--

- (a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes;
- (b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and
- (c) Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

#### Comments on (D)(1)

(a) As a way to develop a workforce knowledge and competency framework and a progression of credentials the applicant established a statewide comprehensive professional development system in the early 1990s. In 1998 developed and implemented the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework including standards for all who work with and for young children. This framework, called The Core Body of Knowledge for Oregon's Childhood Care and Education Profession (CBK) is evidence-based. Oregon has established credibility for the early childhood workforce by supporting the statewide professional development system. This system effectively supports the development of a workforce knowledge system and should lead to increased educational capacity throughout the system. (b) There is a statewide progression of credentials and degrees having established a statewide progression of certificates, credentials and degrees, many of which are aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. This progression includes Oregon Registry Step Certificates, Credentials, Associate's Degrees, Bachelor's degrees and advanced degrees. All Child Care Division licensed practitioners are required to submit their training and/or education documentation to the expanded Oregon Registry Online database. This database, implemented in 2011, provides comprehensive professional development information on all ECE, beginning with 100% of all staff in licensed (ELDP). The plan does provide for common statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with workforce knowledge. A plus was also the Infant/Toddler credential. (c) Oregon offers opportunities for ECE to receive certificates and degrees from 13 Oregon community colleges and 16 Oregon Universities. Agreements with all Oregon community colleges that offer a two year degree in ECE allow for a CDA and/or Step 7 on the Oregon Registry to be used in place of coursework if a person is enrolled in a degree program. These agreements create a link between community-based training and college coursework and encourage ECE to advance their education towards a degree. Oregon's community colleges have collaborated to offer online two year Early Childhood Education degrees. "The Virtual Degree" project and was designed to provide the ECE workforce, especially those in rural areas more access to higher education. The state has taken steps to maintain and grow the cadre of professional development providers across the state.

	Available	Score
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**(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators in Improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.**

20

20

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to improve the effectiveness and retention of Early Childhood Educators who work with Children with High Needs, with the goal of improving child outcomes by--

(a) Providing and expanding access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework;

(b) Implementing policies and incentives (e.g., scholarships, compensation and wage supplements, tiered reimbursement rates, other financial incentives, management opportunities) that promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and that are designed to increase retention;

(c) Publicly reporting aggregated data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention; and

(d) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for--

(1) Increasing the number of postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number of Early Childhood Educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(2) Increasing the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

**Scoring Rubric Used: Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (D)(2)**

(a) Oregon has implemented effective training models that are successfully providing opportunities for training that can lead to skill attainment and be used to meet training requirements for a state approved Credential. There are currently 571 trainers across Oregon who are prepared to offer trainings at a variety of levels. There are 21 standardized curricula in Oregon and 369 standardized trainers delivering these curricula. They are successfully providing opportunities for training that can lead to skill attainment and be used to meet training requirements for a state approved credential. The applicant has developed and implemented a web based comprehensive Training Calendar that provides early learning and development professionals access to trainings that are available in their area. This training calendar is linked to the Oregon Registry Online database allowing trainers to not only list their training events and create participant rosters, but to confirm attendance at those sessions. The trainings are automatically added to individual accounts. The ECE then has access to a comprehensive training and education summary documenting all trainings and showing the alignment with the Core Knowledge Categories. (b) Professional development and career advancement currently supports ECE to participate in professional development opportunities, advancing in their professional journeys and staying committed to the field. Oregon has a strong public-private partnership that works together to develop and implement both policies and incentives leading to this end. Scholarship dollars are made available through funding from the Oregon Community Foundation that increase ECE accessibility to professional development opportunities. These scholarships can be used to pay for Credential related costs, college classes, foreign degree evaluations, accreditation fees and higher level trainings. Last year 1,716 scholarships were awarded equaling \$195,447. Fifty percent of last year's scholarship recipients had been in the scholarship program for two or more years. Also, of those same scholarship recipients, 96% indicated they planned to stay in the field for 3 or more years indicating this is a promising retention strategy. (c) They are well positioned for reporting aggregated data on ECE professional development, advancement and retention. However, it is not yet mandatory. (d1) By the end of 2015, all Oregon community colleges who have early childhood programs will be aligned with the agreed upon Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. In addition, all public run universities will be engaged in the articulation and alignment efforts. By the end of 2015 the number of ECE who receive a Credential and/or Degree from one of Oregon's post-secondary institutions or a professional development provider will have increased to account for 82% of the workforce population. (2) There is a steady increase each year proposed for achieving credentials. Very ambitious targets, but based on the past engagement and commitment of higher education institutions, the goals are very achievable based on the plan.

**E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress**

The total points an applicant may earn for selection criteria (E)(1) and (E)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (E), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.</b>	20	12



The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to implement, independently or as part of a cross-State consortium, a common, statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment that informs instruction and services in the early elementary grades and that--

- (a) Is aligned with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;
- (b) Is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for English learners and children with disabilities;
- (c) Is administered beginning no later than the start of school year 2014-2015 to children entering a public school kindergarten; States may propose a phased implementation plan that forms the basis for broader statewide implementation;
- (d) Is reported to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and to the early learning data system, if it is separate from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, as permitted under and consistent with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws; and
- (e) Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources other than those available under this grant, (e.g., with funds available under section 6111 or 6112 of the ESEA).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (E)(1)**

(a) A committee has been formed that is charged to ensure that the assessment chosen does align with the state standards waiting to be adopted. These standards do include the essential domains of school readiness. By adopting the HSCD Early Learning Framework this ensures that the standards meet the required criteria. (b) The RFP process requires that the instrument is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for English learners and children with disabilities. (c) The Assessment will be piloted in 2012 with a planned implementation date of Fall 2013. (d) Steps taken to date include: a) all children receive a unique SSID when they first enroll in OPK (state Pre-K and Head Start), E/ECSE or kindergarten; and b) a web-based system has been developed for entry of kindergarten entry assessment data that will facilitate reporting to the statewide longitudinal system. In addition, protocols, for reporting the data to the statewide longitudinal system will be developed in preparation for the statewide roll out in 2013. Early learning reform efforts call for linking information among education, healthcare and human services for High Need Children to provide services most effectively and to support positive outcomes. (e) One of the key deliverables is the implementation of a revised Kindergarten Entry Assessment. \$16 Million was appropriated from SB909, but how these dollars will be appropriated was not included. The assessment has not been chosen, however the structure is in place to move forward on the strategy. Oregon has knowledge and experience with a Kindergarten entry assessment since the one previously used was suspended. Based on this, Oregon has the baseline knowledge to move forward in identifying/creating an assessment that will result in a high quality common assessment to be used across all ELDP's. The score reflects a high quality response with an assessment that is not yet chosen but minimally implemented based on the previous assessment that was implemented.

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.</b>	20	16

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to enhance the State's existing Statewide Longitudinal Data System or to build or enhance a separate, coordinated, early learning data system that aligns and is interoperable with the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and that either data system--

- (a) Has all of the Essential Data Elements;
- (b) Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs;
- (c) Facilitates the exchange of data among Participating State Agencies by using standard data structures, data formats, and data definitions such as Common Education Data Standards to ensure interoperability among the various levels and types of data;
- (d) Generates information that is timely, relevant, accessible, and easy for Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood Educators to use for continuous improvement and decision making; and
- (e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (E)(2)**

(a)The applicant provides a plan that is a high quality response that has been partially implemented to enhance the current licensing database which includes the following: A unique statewide child identifier or another highly accurate proven method to link data on children, which will include Kindergarten Entry Assessment data, to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System. This link to the data system will include a unique statewide Early Childhood Educator identifier; a unique program site identifier, Child and family demographic information, Early Childhood Educator demographic information, including data on educational attainment and State credential or licenses held, as well as professional development information, all applicable data reported as part of the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and Child-level program participation and attendance data. (b)The TQRIS web-based data system will enable uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs utilizing and building upon the existing practices. (c) The TQRIS data system will offer multiple Participating State Agencies a mechanism to share information with a common set of data definitions to understand the various data elements. (d) Beginning in 2012, ELDP and ECE will be able to enter data online for reporting purposes, make queries and receive reports. With the enhancement of the TQRIS web based data system, an ELDP will have access to a program-level self-assessment which feeds into a Quality Improvement Plan, as required in the TQRIS. (e) Data Management Association (DAMA) Functional Framework for Data Governance will continue to provide guidance as plans progress for the enhanced system to ensure compliance with federal privacy laws including Federal: HIPAA, FERPA as well as Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs), and local ordinances. Based on the plan there is a basic structure surrounding the data management system and a very ambitious and aggressive strategy to align the data system with all ELDPs throughout the state to collect data related to early learning. Building the system that incorporates all of the elements listed can improve instruction, practices, services and influence policy when having access to a larger pool of aggregated data.

	Available	Score
<b>Total Points Available for Selection Criteria</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>239</b>

#### Priorities

##### Competitive Preference Priorities

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>

Competitive Preference Priority 2 is designed to increase the number of children from birth to kindergarten entry who are participating in programs that are governed by the State's licensing system and quality standards, with the goal that all licensed or State-regulated programs will participate. The State will receive points for this priority based on the extent to which the State has in place, or has a High-Quality Plan to implement no later than June 30, 2015--

(a) A licensing and inspection system that covers all programs that are not otherwise regulated by the State and that regularly care for two or more unrelated children for a fee in a provider setting; provided that if the State exempts programs for reasons other than the number of children cared for, the State may exclude those entities and reviewers will score this priority only on the basis of non-excluded entities; and

(b) A Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System in which all licensed or State-regulated Early Learning and Development Programs participate.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

#### **Comments on (P)(2)**

(a)While Oregon has participation among all licensed ELDP, there remains unlicensed ELDP still needing representation in Oregon's TQRIS. Unlicensed ELDP include a variety of ELDP such as license-exempt Head Start, Early Head Start, Pre-K, and IDEA-funded ELDP. Towards achieving full participation in the state's TQRIS, Oregon has determined that aligning standards across licensing, TQRIS, Head Start, and Pre-K is an important first step in creating an articulated system that links and translates early childhood standards. However, not all programs are required to participate in the licensing inspection system. (b)Currently 100% of licensed ELDP programs currently participate in its TQRIS system. However, there are some state exemptions and Oregon intends to work with key stakeholders, unions, and policy developers around working towards a licensing system that is legally required to license ELDP regularly caring for two or more unrelated children.

#### Priorities

	Available	Yes/No
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry</b>	<b>0 or 10</b>	<b>No</b>

To meet this priority, the State must, in its application--

(a) Demonstrate that it has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1) by indicating that all elements in Status Table (A)(1)-12 are met; or

(b) Address selection criterion (E)(1) and earn a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.

**Comments on (P)(3)**

The state has not addressed criterion (E)(1) with a score of 70%. This score is reflected by the fact that a common Kindergarten entry assessment tool is not currently implemented throughout the state, however the state was proactive in their approach by suspending the Kindergarten Entry assessment because it was not a valid and reliable assessment. The instrument was not used statewide and was implemented on a voluntary basis. A committee has been formed that is charged to ensure that the assessment chosen does align with the state standards waiting to be adopted. These standards do include the essential domains of school readiness. By adopting the HSCD Early Learning Framework ensures that the standards meet the required criteria. The RFP process requires that the instrument is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for English learners and children with disabilities. The Assessment will be piloted in 2012 with a planned implementation date of Fall 2013.

**Absolute Priority**

	Met? Yes/No
<p><b>Absolute Priority - Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.</b></p> <p>To meet this priority, the State's application must comprehensively and coherently address how the State will build a system that increases the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed.</p> <p>The State's application must demonstrate how it will improve the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs by integrating and aligning resources and policies across Participating State Agencies and by designing and implementing a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. In addition, to achieve the necessary reforms, the State must make strategic improvements in those specific reform areas that will most significantly improve program quality and outcomes for Children with High Needs. Therefore, the State must address those criteria from within each of the Focused Investment Areas (sections (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children, (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce, and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress) that it believes will best prepare its Children with High Needs for kindergarten success.</p>	Yes
<p><b>Comments on Absolute Priority</b></p>	
<p>The State has met this absolute priority by presenting an application that is comprehensive and addresses how it will build upon the current system to increase the quality of the ELDP for children with High Needs and ALL children in the state of Oregon. All levels of government are represented throughout the presentation of the reform agenda. Signed MOU's from the key state agencies along with scope of work for each entity was presented throughout. Oregon currently has a 3 tier TORIS system and intends to add 2 more tiers to increase quality among ELDP programs. There is not 100% participation within the TORIS system but a plan was presented to increase plan participation. The focused investment areas were sufficiently addressed in preparing the state children for Kindergarten success. A history of state support for early childhood education was presented and the state government has also committed to support early learning throughout the state through the presented reform agenda.</p>	



Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Review



Technical Review Form Page

Application # OR-5030

Peer Reviewer: [Redacted]  
Lead Monitor: [Redacted]  
Support Monitor: [Redacted]  
Application Status: Reviewed  
Date/Time: 11/17/2011 - 5:20 PM

**CORE AREAS (A) and (B)**

States must address in their application all of the selection criteria in the Core Areas.

**A. Successful State Systems**

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development</b>	20	15

The extent to which the State has demonstrated past commitment to and investment in high-quality, accessible Early Learning and Development Programs and services for Children with High Needs, as evidenced by the State's--

(a) Financial investment, from January 2007 to the present, in Early Learning and Development Programs, including the amount of these investments in relation to the size of the State's population of Children with High Needs during this time period;

(b) Increasing, from January 2007 to the present, the number of Children with High Needs participating in Early Learning and Development Programs;

(c) Existing early learning and development legislation, policies, or practices; and

(d) Current status in key areas that form the building blocks for a high quality early learning and development system, including Early Learning and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, health promotion practices, family engagement strategies, the development of Early Childhood Educators, Kindergarten Entry Assessments, and effective data practices.

Scoring Rubric Used: Quality

**Comments on (A)(1)**

a and b) The investment of the state of Oregon in early childhood education from 2007-2011 remained steady. There was a decrease in Title 1 funds used for Pre-K and the Child Care Contribution Tax Credit. There was an increase in funds from Supplemental State spending on Early Head Start in 2009. There has been a fairly steady amount of funds allocated to early childhood. The emphasis on funding for early childhood programs is relatively recent. b) Documentation provided for the size of the State's population of children with high needs from 2007 to present does not give the exact number of children with high needs served in Oregon or served in each category. The number of children who are English Language Learners is calculated by multiplying the number of children from birth to Kindergarten in Oregon by the percent of English Language households. This does not separate the number of children per household who are in the age range of birth to Kindergarten. The footnote for children who reside on "Indian lands" states the data is not available by a single age so it does not reflect the number of children who reside on "Indian lands" and are in the age range of birth to kindergarten. Homeless children are categorized as homeless children and youth as documented in footnote 6 for Table (A)(1)(2). The text in a paragraph of the narrative in section A. (1)(c) states that early childhood program resource cuts made during the years 2009-2011 have been reversed. This coincides with funds Oregon received from the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Table (A)(1)-5 provides the number of children served each year from 2007-2011 with the caveat in the table heading that a grand total of the number of children served is not possible since some children were served through multiple programs. These facts make it difficult to determine the size of the State's population of children with high needs and the amount of the financial investment in relation to the number of children receiving services supported by the financial investment of Oregon. c) Early Learning and Development legislation referred to in this section of the application was passed in 2011. The current policy pertaining to Early Childhood programs is found in the Governor's Early Childhood and Family Transition Report prepared in January of 2011. The Early Learning Council, charged with leading the implementation of this policy, plans to build on work underway and intends to partner with state agencies. Further evidence of policies and practices yet to be put in place is provided by the statement that Senate Bill 248 plans to establish full day kindergarten in 2015. A universal screening process to identify children with high needs is being designed. The language in this section indicates



the applicant will implement certain plans without giving the specific details that provide information to assess implementation of the activities of the grant. The applicant currently has Early Learning Guidelines. These are in the process of being reevaluated to encompass the Common Core Standards and the 2010 Head Start Early Learning Framework. A comprehensive assessment system is in place for Oregon Head Start as well as Oregon Pre-Kindergarten and Early Head Start. Health promotion practices are tied to licensing requirements. Future plans are to create services under the auspices of the newly created Oregon Health Authority. A strong component of the current TQRIS is family engagement strategies, which will be the foundation for the expanded TQRIS based on more extensive program standards. The newly created Early Learning Council plans to address family engagement strategies statewide. There has been a center for professional development, The Oregon Center for Career Development in Childhood Care and Education, since 1993. A database started in 2008 provides information about all EI/ECSE programs. These initiatives demonstrate prior commitment to Early Childhood programs. There was a Kindergarten Entry Assessment in place but it was discarded in 2010 because of lack of reliability and validity. There was no evidence of progress since 2010 to initiate a process to obtain a more valid and reliable kindergarten entry assessment. A policy enacted in January, 2011, provides for universal screening to identify children with high needs and use the information to support children and their families as they choose providers. Details were not provided for the specific components of the screening instrument or how the screening instrument would be used to address intervention with children of high needs. Legislation and policies enacted in the last six months indicate the state may have some building blocks in place, such as Kindergarten Entry Assessment and Early Learning and Development Standards, and have some governance components to put in place prior to beginning the projects and activities of the grant.

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.</b>	20	10

The extent to which the State clearly articulates a comprehensive early learning and development reform agenda that is ambitious yet achievable, builds on the State's progress to date (as demonstrated in selection criterion (A)(1)), is most likely to result in improved school readiness for Children with High Needs, and includes--

(a) Ambitious yet achievable goals for improving program quality, improving outcomes for Children with High Needs statewide, and closing the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers;

(b) An overall summary of the State Plan that clearly articulates how the High-Quality Plans proposed under each selection criterion, when taken together, constitute an effective reform agenda that establishes a clear and credible path toward achieving these goals; and

(c) A specific rationale that justifies the State's choice to address the selected criteria in each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E), including why these selected criteria will best achieve these goals.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

**Comments on (A)(2)**

a) The applicant states three goals for a reform agenda to result in school readiness. The three goals are: "1. Children enter school ready to learn. 2. Children leave first grade meeting established standards for reading. 3. State funded services, agencies and structures are integrated to support these goals." The goals are ambitious. The state did not provide information about a way to measure when the goals are achieved. Children with High Needs are not mentioned in these three goals. Achieving the goal of meeting established standards for reading when children leave first grade is not measurable by assessments included in this grant. The Essential Domains of School Readiness include language and literacy development, not the achievement of reading. b) School readiness will be addressed through a comprehensive reform of the Early Learning and Development Standards. A Kindergarten Entry Assessment that is valid and reliable will be implemented by 2014. The second reform action is to build a system of early and universal screening. One paragraph in this section describes the screening tools recommended by the Design Team. A subsequent section describes the development of a common screening tool that will be used by Family Support Managers to provide a common point of access for families and their children. The project designed to ensure high quality programs meet the needs of families with high needs children is the revision of the Tiered Quality Rating System begun in 2008. The state currently has three tiers and it will rate based on five tiers. A key component to evaluate the TQRIS beyond the evaluation of structural factors currently in place is the CLASS. It is currently used in Head Start centers. The use of the CLASS would be expanded, raters trained and inter-rater reliability established. Broad parameters for this process are included in the narrative. Measureable objectives are not provided to determine if the goal is met. The need to improve outcomes is addressed by a planned validation study to correlate the higher tiers of the TQRIS with students outcomes. Subsidies will be available for Children with High Needs to attend the child care providers with higher ratings. The goal of empowering families to make choices for their children is achieved through the services of the Family Support Manager and a consumer education program tied with social marketing. There are aspects of the social marketing program that focus on the children with high needs. One aspect is the focus on families with high needs children. The review of this section is general and includes some restatement of facts in the application. It is challenging to determine whether the state plan is an effective reform plan since it does not have measureable objectives. A clear and credible path to meeting the goal was not described in this section. Goals are stated but it could not be determined if the goals were ambitious yet achievable since outcomes for the goals were not given. The goal may be achieved by completing projects of the grant. Determining whether or not children would be ready for school does not seem feasible since the current status and expected outcomes are not given. c) The state provided some information to justify their choice of focused investment areas. Early learning standards will be revised, the competency of ECE will be improved, and child care providers will be registered in the data base.

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State</b>	10	7

The extent to which the State has established, or has a High-Quality Plan to establish, strong participation and commitment in the State Plan by Participating State Agencies and other early learning and development stakeholders by--

(a) Demonstrating how the Participating State Agencies and other partners, if any, will identify a governance structure for working together that will facilitate interagency coordination, streamline decision making, effectively allocate resources, and create long-term sustainability and describing--

(1) The organizational structure for managing the grant and how it builds upon existing interagency governance structures such as children's cabinets, councils, and commissions, if any already exist and are effective;

(2) The governance-related roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency, the State Advisory Council, each Participating State Agency, the State's Interagency Coordinating Council for part C of IDEA, and other partners, if any;

(3) The method and process for making different types of decisions (e.g., policy, operational) and resolving disputes; and

(4) The plan for when and how the State will involve representatives from Participating Programs, Early Childhood Educators or their representatives, parents and families, including parents and families of Children with High Needs, and other key stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the activities carried out under the grant;

(b) Demonstrating that the Participating State Agencies are strongly committed to the State Plan, to the governance structure of the grant, and to effective implementation of the State Plan, by including in the MOU or other binding agreement between the State and each Participating State Agency--

(1) Terms and conditions that reflect a strong commitment to the State Plan by each Participating State Agency, including terms and conditions designed to align and leverage the Participating State Agencies' existing funding to support the State Plan;

(2) "Scope-of-work" descriptions that require each Participating State Agency to implement all applicable portions of the State Plan and a description of efforts to maximize the number of Early Learning and Development Programs that become Participating Programs; and

(3) A signature from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency; and

(c) Demonstrating commitment to the State Plan from a broad group of stakeholders that will assist the State in reaching the ambitious yet achievable goals outlined in response to selection criterion (A)(2)(a), including by obtaining--

(1) Detailed and persuasive letters of intent or support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, and, if applicable, local early learning councils; and

(2) Letters of intent or support from such other stakeholders as Early Childhood Educators or their representatives; the State's legislators; local community leaders; State or local school boards; representatives of private and faith-based early learning programs; other State and local leaders (e.g., business, community, tribal, civil rights, education association leaders); adult education and family literacy State and local leaders; family and community organizations (e.g., parent councils, nonprofit organizations, local foundations, tribal organizations, and community-based organizations); libraries and children's museums; health providers; and postsecondary institutions.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

#### Comments on (A)(3)

An organizational structure describes the role and responsibility of each agency. Key personnel to head the Early Learning Council will be hired after the grant is awarded. Other structures were in place but were changed or eliminated in June, 2011, when the current revamping of early childhood programs was approved by the legislature. Implementation of a completely new organizational structure and the grant at the same time will require clear timelines and guidance. The executive branch will take the lead and the Early Learning Council is the structure that will govern the activities of the grant and report to the governor. The lead agency is the Department of Health and Human Services. The State Interagency Coordinating Council for Part C of IDEA is listed in a separate section under other entities and charged with a direct role in achieving the goals of the RTT-ELC. Policy decisions will be made by the Early Learning Council, operational decisions will be made by the Early Childhood Systems Director, and disputes will be resolved within the executive branch under the authority of the Governor and the Early Learning Council, the policy making body. Representatives of child care providers and early childhood educators have a peripheral involvement in the planning and implementation activities of the grant. A broader organizational structure could provide a higher degree of stakeholder involvement in grant implementation. b) There are signed MOUs, which include the scope of work for each entity, by many state organizations. They appear supportive of the scope of the grant. The scope of work for each agency is included in

the narrative describing the budget tables. c) There are numerous letters of intent signed by community organizations. One public school foundation and one school's service district were included. The inclusion of a limited number of public school organizations raises a concern about the involvement of the public school system. The quality of the plan to achieve the goal of school readiness would be supported by a higher level of coordination and commitment from the school system. The governance structure is newly, not yet fully, implemented. Stakeholder participation and participation by private entities in early childhood issues has been in place for at least a year. This is partially implemented with a high quality response.

	Available	Score
(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant.	15	12

The extent to which the State Plan--

(a) Demonstrates how the State will use existing funds that support early learning and development from Federal, State, private, and local sources (e.g., CCDF; Title I and II of ESEA; IDEA; Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program; State preschool; Head Start Collaboration and State Advisory Council funding; Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program; Title V MCH Block Grant; TANF; Medicaid; child welfare services under Title IV (B) and (E) of the Social Security Act; Statewide Longitudinal Data System; foundation; other private funding sources) for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, including how the quality set-asides in CCDF will be used;

(b) Describes, in both the budget tables and budget narratives, how the State will effectively and efficiently use funding from this grant to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, in a manner that--

- (1) Is adequate to support the activities described in the State Plan;
- (2) Includes costs that are reasonable and necessary in relation to the objectives, design, and significance of the activities described in the State Plan and the number of children to be served; and
- (3) Details the amount of funds budgeted for Participating State Agencies, localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners, and the specific activities to be implemented with these funds consistent with the State Plan, and demonstrates that a significant amount of funding will be devoted to the local implementation of the State Plan; and

(c) Demonstrates that it can be sustained after the grant period ends to ensure that the number and percentage of Children with High Needs served by Early Learning and Development Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

**Comments on (A)(4)**

The applicant will use an existing \$2.7 million in Project ALDER funds from the US Department of Education for the Early Childhood Data System. The existing Child Care Development Fund has been used for workforce initiatives. Specific uses of the fund for this grant are not defined. The existing (until 2013) Children's Levy in Portland will give more low-income children access to child care, increase literacy activities, and provide case management and home visits to at-risk families. Since this is a Portland levy, these funds serve only children in the Portland area. Other private entities have pledged matching funds if the grant is awarded. The grant is leveraging existing funds to support the early learning and development initiatives of this grant in the area of data systems. The narrative states a goal of the Oregon Early Learning Council is reviewing how to merge, redesign, or improve coordination of programs and funds from six state agencies to "ensure children are ready to learn when entering kindergarten, ready to read entering first grade and reading by the end of first grade". All of these funds will be under the Early Learning Council to have one policy discussion so families experience consistent and efficient service delivery. b)The applicant provides evidence verifying the budget is adequate to support the activities described in the state plan, the costs are reasonable, and funds are distributed to various agencies to complete the activities described in the State plan. Budget tables are provided for each agency responsible for implementation for a part of the grant as well as overall grant funds. Agency budgets provide amounts of money attached to grant projects. The applicant gives as outcomes completion of the TQRIS system, implementation of social marketing initiatives, and completion of a Kindergarten Entry Assessment. The state plan lists many activities leading to the goals stated and the budget supports these activities. c)The state gives evidence of sustainability by restructuring funds that will then be administered by the Early Learning Council, streamlining and coordinating existing services, and identifying children with high needs as soon as possible. Grant funds are allocated to infrastructure initiatives and will require minimal funding to maintain.

**B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs**

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System	10	7

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and adopted, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and adopt, a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System that--

(a) Is based on a statewide set of tiered Program Standards that include--

- (1) Early Learning and Development Standards;
- (2) A Comprehensive Assessment System;
- (3) Early Childhood Educator qualifications;
- (4) Family engagement strategies;
- (5) Health promotion practices; and
- (6) Effective data practices;

(b) Is clear and has standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program quality levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards that lead to improved learning outcomes for children; and

(c) Is linked to the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (B)(1)**

Oregon currently has a three tier system to distinguish levels of program quality indicating a system is existing. The lowest level of the three tier rating and improvement system Oregon currently has is based on licensing requirements. A five tiered system is to be implemented in January, 2012. The effectiveness will be evaluated through independent evaluations. The TQRIS will be aligned with the ELDS. The plan is to take the TQRIS to a universal scale by including programs beyond the scope of current licensing requirements. This meets the goal of expanding programs included in the TQRIS system. A comprehensive assessment system is required for the top tiers and the comprehensive assessment system has yet to be identified. The Workforce currently has a career lattice to report data on ECE. Family engagement strategies are already a strong component of the current TQRIS system. Health promotion practices are a component of the higher tiers. Data on ECE will be reported and used to rate the Early Childhood programs. Standards for the TQRIS are clearly explained. The missing element is a measurable component to make rating the different programs even more objective. The current TQRIS system is linked to the State licensing system and licensing is included in the plan for the new TQRIS system. The system will be implemented in stages with Head Start centers on the list to be brought into the system at the beginning of the expansion. This addresses the ability of High Needs children to be in quality programs. The state plan to adopt a TQRIS is an ambitious plan. Providing specific detail for differentiation elements between tiers would increase the quality of this plan. There is partial implementation with a high quality response.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>

The extent to which the State has maximized, or has a High-Quality Plan to maximize, program participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Implementing effective policies and practices to reach the goal of having all publicly funded Early Learning and Development Programs participate in such a system, including programs in each of the following categories--

- (1) State-funded preschool programs;
- (2) Early Head Start and Head Start programs;
- (3) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA;
- (4) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA; and
- (5) Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program;

(b) Implementing effective policies and practices designed to help more families afford high-quality child care and maintain the supply of high-quality child care in areas with high concentrations of Children with High Needs (e.g., maintaining or increasing subsidy reimbursement rates, taking actions to ensure affordable co-payments, providing incentives to high-quality providers to participate in the subsidy program); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for the numbers and percentages of Early Learning and Development Programs that will participate in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by type of Early Learning and Development Program (as listed in (B)(2)(a)(1) through (5) above).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**



**Comments on (B)(2)**

The State has an effective Quality Indicators Project in existence with a system of collecting data. This data will be used to improve the program. The integration of Head Start standards and licensing standards demonstrates the state's wide design to incorporate state-funded preschool programs, Early Head Start and Head Start programs. Targets are set for the inclusion of IDEA programs, Title 1 funded programs, and programs receiving CCDF funds. IDEA programs and Title 1 programs begin with a baseline of 0%. The State has supported families of Children with High Needs in their ability to access high quality programs by providing subsidies and reimbursement co-pays. The subsidies further support low-income families whose children have severe physical or mental disabilities by giving them higher subsidies to support the higher level of care required. This financial commitment of the state provides services to the children who have the highest needs and benefit from the high level of care possible with this extra financial benefit. The Early Learning Council will identify geographic areas with higher populations of Children with High Needs for early coaching. The purpose of the coaching is to assist the programs to move up in tiers. The participation goal by the end of the grant in 2015 is programs funded by IDEA is 34%. The goal for participation by the end of 2012 is 0% and by the end of 2013 9%. The baseline for participation in the TQRIS system for programs funded by IDEA is 0%. Children with High Needs are currently served in programs funded by Early Head Start, Head Start, CCDF funds, and in state licensed programs. The target for these programs, in 2015, is 100% participation in the TQRIS by State-funded preschool, Early Head Start and Head Start, and State-Licensed programs. The target for programs funded under Title 1 to participate in TQRIS is 75%. The target for programs receiving CCDF funds to participate in TQRIS is 50%. Programs funded by IDEA serve Children with High Needs and it is a concern that the target for children participating in these programs to participate in TQRIS is less than 50%. The goals are achievable yet not ambitious. Implementation of this plan to date is not documented. Over 1,000 programs are on Tier 1 and about 400 programs are on another tier. This does not provide evidence that the state has provided support to move programs to a higher tier in the TQRIS. This initiative is partially implemented with a medium quality response.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs</b>	15	9

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for rating and monitoring the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Using a valid and reliable tool for monitoring such programs, having trained monitors whose ratings have an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability, and monitoring and rating the Early Learning and Development Programs with appropriate frequency; and

(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs (e.g., displaying quality rating information at the program site) and making program quality rating data, information, and licensing history (including any health and safety violations) publicly available in formats that are easy to understand and use for decision making by families selecting Early Learning and Development Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (B)(3)**

Data collected through the Child Care Regulator Information System (licensing information) and Oregon Registry Online (training and education for ECE) are currently used to rate and monitor the structural elements of an ELDP. The applicant cites evidence that an increase in program quality, to achieve the rating of a higher tier, is documented using a portfolio process. The specific items or documents to include in the portfolio are not identified. Portfolios are required but the screening process to assess the quality of the portfolios and use them as a tool is in development. The date that TQRIS policies and procedures are to be in place to begin appropriate monitoring is the 2nd-4th quarter of 2014, which appears late. The coaching model to assist ELDPs to move to higher tiers begins in the 3rd quarter of 2013, before the policies and procedures for TQRIS are finalized. The Tiered Early Learning and Development Program graph identifies requirements for Tier 5, the top tier. The applicant is in the process of deciding which instruments will be used to meet the requirements for child screening and child assessments. The use of CLASS is proposed and the state is establishing a group of trained monitors to be available the second quarter of 2013. The process is in place waiting for the parts to be available for use. The process is general. Coaches will be trained without giving the number of coaches to be trained and the number of ECE they will work with or the number of ELDPs. The timeline describes the development and implementation of a coaching model for ELDP moving to Tier 4 and 5 of TQRIS. Monitoring will occur triennially with annual reports. The on-site monitoring combined with annual reports provides sufficient accountability measures for the ELDPs to maintain a consistent level of quality over time. Quality rating and licensing information to parents will be provided through a social marketing campaign. After a social marketing campaign is launched research by the firm contracted for this service will develop a plan for disseminating information about ELDP to parents. The timeline in this section states parents would begin receiving information about ELDPs in the fall of 2014 and a website for parents to access information about ELDPs will be available the first six months of 2015. This medium quality, partially implemented plan will provide parents and guardians information they need to choose high quality early learning and development programs for their children.

	Available	Score
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The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for improving the quality of the Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development Programs to continuously improve (e.g., through training, technical assistance, financial rewards or incentives, higher subsidy reimbursement rates, compensation);

(b) Providing supports to help working families who have Children with High Needs access high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs that meet those needs (e.g., providing full-day, full-year programs; transportation; meals; family support services); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing--

(1) The number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and

(2) The number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (B)(4)**

Currently the State has a three tier TQRIS established in 2009 with the use of private funds. The ELDPs participating in the system are licensed programs. Proposals for providing support to ELDPs to improve are: Use data currently collected to target supports and incentives; award educators who attain specific levels on the Oregon Registry; develop a coaching technical assistance model; align public funding with the higher TQRIS tiers; and align subsidies and supports with incentives for ELDPs to advance to higher levels of quality program ratings. Training will be available to unlicensed child care providers of children who receive subsidies. Oregon currently has multiple supports to help working, low-income families by providing full day/full year Head Start services. Other populations with access to this program are foster parents and children of migrant families. Oregon contracts with providers to serve other populations of Children with High Needs such a children with disabilities, children of teen parents, and children whose parents are in alcohol and drug treatment. Children who are English Language Learners have child care providers who received training in languages other than English. Oregon identified a problem with the length of time families could have subsidies. As a result, Oregon is moving to a 12 month eligibility period and providing policies to increase continuity. Access will be improved by the plans the state has for children described above and increased financial incentives. Information about the current status of the TQRIS in Oregon is provided in the table for the Performance Measure for (B)(4)(c)(1): Increasing the number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. The information reported as baseline data for the date the grant was submitted gives the number of programs in Tier 1 as 4636, the number of programs in Tier 4 as 25, and the number of programs in Tiers 2,3, and 5 as zero. The number of programs in Tier 4 is particularly interesting since the state system is currently a three tier system. The current status of ELDP in Oregon is Tier 1-Licensing. The state does not appear to currently implement a system for improving the quality of ELDP in the state since there are no programs listed in Tier 2. The state has provided baseline numbers of programs in each tier and set achievable targets for the number of programs to progress through the tiers. The number and percent of children with high needs in programs now and progressing to higher tiers over the time of the grant is achievable. One part that is not clear is the definition of top tiers in table (B)(4)(c)(2) since another table stated that most programs are now in Tier 1. Children with high needs served by programs in the state are currently in Tier 1 programs. This indicates partial implementation. The quality plan addresses multiple types of Children with High Needs and considers support for the children and their parents.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(5) Validating the effectiveness of the State Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.</b>	15	12

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to design and implement evaluations--working with an independent evaluator and, when warranted, as part of a cross-State evaluation consortium--of the relationship between the ratings generated by the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and the learning outcomes of children served by the State's Early Learning and Development Programs by--

(a) Validating, using research-based measures, as described in the State Plan (which also describes the criteria that the State used or will use to determine those measures), whether the tiers in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System accurately reflect differential levels of program quality; and

(b) Assessing, using appropriate research designs and measures of progress (as identified in the State Plan), the extent to which changes in quality ratings are related to progress in children's learning, development, and school readiness.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

**Comments on (B)(5)**

a) Validation of the TQRIS will be completed by the end of the grant in 2015. The validation will be conducted by a team of university researchers. This team previously conducted an evaluation study of the current three tier TQRIS. This will be the foundation for completing the validation study for the five tier system by the end of the grant period. The validation study uses the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment, not the proposed Kindergarten Entry Assessment, for children entering Kindergarten in the 4th quarter of 2014. This is the only learning assessment with outcomes for children's learning identified. Prior information in the application said the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment was found to be not valid and reliable and its use has been suspended. The applicant said a Kindergarten Entry Assessment would be developed. The results of the validation study would tie directly to learning outcomes statewide if an assessment is identified to be used statewide and is directly linked to the Early Learning and Development Standards. There appears to be contradictions in the use of the discontinued Kindergarten Readiness Assessment. Validation, based on a discontinued assessment does not appear effective for the purposes of the grant. b) The state will use about 200 ELDP to collect data each year beginning in 2015 for the purpose of tracking quality improvement supports and strategies as well as determine the difference between levels of quality. There will be a formative evaluation incorporated into the design of the TQRIS model. The plan provides data to correlate learning outcomes with the TQRIS ratings.

**Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E)**

Each State must address in its application--

- (1) Two or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (C);
- (2) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D), and
- (3) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E).

The total available points for each Focused Investment Area will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that area, so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points.

**C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children**

The total available points that an applicant may receive for selection criteria (C)(1) through (C)(4) is 60. The 60 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address all four selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 15 points. If the applicant chooses to address two selection criteria, each criterion will be worth up to 30 points.

The applicant must address at least two of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>18</b>

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to put in place high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards that are used statewide by Early Learning and Development Programs and that--

- (a) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate across each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, and that they cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness;
- (b) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics;
- (c) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are incorporated in Program Standards, curricula and activities, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and professional development activities; and
- (d) The State has supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to the Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (C)(1)**

Early Learning Standards for children 0-2 have been developed and validated. Early Learning Standards for children 3 to 5 are the Head Start standards. The state will use the new Head Start Guidelines as the standards for children 3-5 and the current standards for children 0-2 will remain in effect until standards are aligned for 0-5. A strength of using the Early Childhood Guidelines for Head Start as the basis for Oregon's standards for children 3-5 is the assurance that the Head Start Guidelines were developed by the US Department of Health and Human Services with strict guidelines to incorporate the Essential Domains of School Readiness and meet the requirements of culturally, linguistically, and developmentally appropriate. The state will align the Early Childhood Learning standards 0-5 and then align the 0-5 standards with Common Core Standards K-12. The Federal guidance stated in the criteria area of each section requests a plan to align with K-3 academic standards. The focus of this grant is Early Childhood so it will be important for the funds in this grant to be used for early childhood standards alignment for school readiness and not extend the use of funds beyond the scope of early childhood

programs, such as funding the alignment of standards beyond third grade. After the standards are aligned they will be incorporated into the Workforce framework and training activities. Plans include using the Early Learning and Development Standards with the Comprehensive Assessment System as it is developed. The timeline does not provide information about the development or implementation of a comprehensive assessment system. The timeline provides evidence that the alignment of all standards will be completed by 2015. The timeline required some searching since the first entry was the 1st quarter of 2012 to adopt the HSCD Early Learning Framework into state agency policies. The last entry in the timeline was the 1st quarter of 2012, the same time entry as the first entry, with the task assigned to the time slot to be sure the KEA is aligned with the HSCD framework before the assessment instrument is selected. The alignment of the 3-5 standards and the 0-2 standards, and the resulting training for ECEs, was divided into separate strands instead of being aligned as a cohesive whole for children and the ECEs. Training will be provided for the ECE and the public school personnel to understand the early learning standards in 2015, the final year of the grant. The state has a commitment to Early Childhood Guidelines yet the public school system does not incorporate them until 2015. The late implementation of this important component of the standards could prevent the standards being tied to curriculum and activities. The plan for developing the standards is specific and in the timeline. The state does not indicate how the standards will be used to improve programs, to address the instructional needs of children, or how to create learning goals for children as a result of having the Early Learning and Development Standards. The use of standards is not described in the application. The revision of standards and the subsequent alignment dominates the narrative and timeline of this application. Early Learning and Development Standards are currently in existence statewide. Information about the use of the ELDS is not provided which indicates a partially implemented status of this section of the application. Future use and implementation of the ELDS appears to be in this medium quality plan.

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>18</b>

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs by--

(a) Establishing a progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety; ensuring that health and behavioral screening and follow-up occur; and promoting children's physical, social, and emotional development across the levels of its Program Standards;

(b) Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained and supported on an on-going basis in meeting the health standards;

(c) Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity; and

(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who--

(1) Are screened using Screening Measures that align with the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment benefit (see section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act) or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (42 CFR 457.520), and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA (see sections 612(a)(3) and 635(a)(5) of IDEA);

(2) Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and where appropriate, received follow-up; and

(3) Participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care, including the number of children who are up to date in a schedule of well-child care.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

#### Comments on (C)(3)

a) Oregon has some health screening services offered through Medicaid but the applicant states there is not a distinct Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) program. Many other agencies, and health practitioners, provide screening services outside of ELDPs. b) The applicant also provides information that ECE training for standardized developmental screening and referral protocols will be added to the training curriculum within the next year. ECE have been offered training in health practices. Training is planned for ECEs to understand elements of the KEA assessment. This seems out of place and there is not a reference to it in the narrative. There are measureable objectives for the number of ECEs who work in licensed facilities to be trained in critical health and safety issues. This is one of the few places to mention evidence of measureable objectives. c) The applicant promotes healthy eating habits and exercise through an initiative I am Moving, I Am Learning Child Care model. d) There is a collaborative approach among agencies as well as training for the workforce. Activities and support for Children with High Needs is addressed by the training component provided by Partners for Inclusive Child Care. The target for the number of Children with High Needs living in low income homes to be screened is currently 13.7% and is 24.2% for 2015. This does not reflect an ambitious goal for an increase in screening services for this population. There is a high percentage, 91%, of children served in well child care. Since the state does not have a screening procedure this must refer to the screening administered by a health care professional. Well-child care is incorporated in this plan. This plan appears to be partially implemented with a medium quality response.



#### D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce

The total points that a State may earn for selection criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (D), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.</b>	20	16

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to--

(a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes;

(b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(c) Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

#### Comments on (D)(1)

a)The applicant provides evidence of a history of professional development dating from 1993. The Oregon Center for Career Development in Childhood Care and Education developed professional development standards and systems to support training for professionals in education in the state. The OCCD developed and implemented the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework for educators of young children. Oregon titles this framework The Core Body of Knowledge (CBK) for Oregon's Childhood Care and Education Professional. The CBK is widely used but is not used statewide by all ECE. The applicant provides documentation of the information used from reliable, authoritative professional organizations to develop the CBK. b)Oregon currently has a 12 step career lattice based on the CBK. The Oregon Online Registry database, implemented in 2011, provides information on the completion of the each step of professional development by all staff in licensed ELDP. Programs, training, or degrees outside of education that provide evidence of the attainment of skills defined in the CBK will be accepted for professional development credit. This procedure ensures ECE will access professional development that is tied to levels of knowledge needed and reported in the data system. c)The timeline describes a timely process for aligning the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework with the TQRIS. The process will be accomplished with input from representative agencies statewide by the second quarter of 2013. The framework will be given to all providers of professional development, including the post-secondary educational institutions. Child outcomes are addressed in two framework categories: Observation and Development; and Understanding and Guiding Behavior. The CBK describes how these standards directly impact children's learning. The needs of special populations are represented in the categories of special needs and diversity. This is the foundation for incorporating the EI/ECSE competencies of ECE serving Children with High Needs. Substantial implementation is in effect in Oregon and there is a plan to align professional development providers with the workforce framework. The response is of medium quality.

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.</b>	20	16

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to improve the effectiveness and retention of Early Childhood Educators who work with Children with High Needs, with the goal of improving child outcomes by--

(a) Providing and expanding access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework;

(b) Implementing policies and incentives (e.g., scholarships, compensation and wage supplements, tiered reimbursement rates, other financial incentives, management opportunities) that promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and that are designed to increase retention;

(c) Publicly reporting aggregated data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention; and

(d) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for--

(1) Increasing the number of postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs

that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number of Early Childhood Educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and

(2) Increasing the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (D)(2)**

a) Access to professional development is through the Oregon Registry Trainer Program developed and implemented in conjunction with the Oregon Registry and the CBK. Oregon currently has an extensive trainer program, 571 trainers, coordinated by OCCD to deliver professional development based on the Core Body of Knowledge. Several trainings are offered to ECE. Positive outcomes are expected without descriptions of the specific outcomes and a way of measuring the effectiveness of the training. Scholarships are offered as an incentive for continued professional development. There are awards for ECE who work at least 20 hours a week with children in licensed ELDP or serving families qualifying for subsidies and continued their work toward further professional development opportunities. Documentation of the effectiveness of this program is provided by the increase in the level of steps ECEs have attained. The status of reporting data of ECE professional development has been via the Oregon Registry in existence since 2005. This has been based on voluntary participation and is not in a format to be reported publicly. The newly developed Oregon Registry Online will make it possible, at a future date, to report professional development levels obtained by ECEs. A specific date for this to be completed is not documented. The target for aligning post-secondary institutions with credentials aligned to the Workforce Framework is for all community colleges to be aligned by 2015 and public universities to be in the process of alignment. The number of ECEs who have achieved a credential or degree will increase to 82% of the child care and Head Start workforce. The number pertains to child care providers and Head Start personnel indicating ECE in the public school will not be integrated into the system of ECE. Professional development plans will be in place for 1105 ECEs by the end of year 1. The question is raised about the quality of the professional development plans when the curriculum tied to the TQRIS is not completed until the end of Year 2. Training goals are ambitious and can be achieved by the end of the grant. Additional training for screening instruments and transition to kindergarten will occur in 2014. Foundations for the Workforce Framework tied to the TQRIS are in place, as is the Oregon Registry Online. The timeline indicates the grant will be completed before public school early childhood educators are integrated into the system. The plan is substantially implemented with a medium quality response.

**E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress**

*The total points an applicant may earn for selection criteria (E)(1) and (E)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.*

*The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (E), which are as follows:*

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>
<p>The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to implement, independently or as part of a cross-State consortium, a common, statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment that informs instruction and services in the early elementary grades and that--</p> <p>(a) Is aligned with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;</p> <p>(b) Is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for English learners and children with disabilities;</p> <p>(c) Is administered beginning no later than the start of school year 2014-2015 to children entering a public school kindergarten; States may propose a phased implementation plan that forms the basis for broader statewide implementation;</p> <p>(d) Is reported to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and to the early learning data system, if it is separate from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, as permitted under and consistent with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws; and</p> <p>(e) Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources other than those available under this grant, (e.g., with funds available under section 6111 or 6112 of the ESEA).</p>		

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (E)(1)**

a and b) The Kindergarten Entry Assessment chosen for this grant will be one that is already developed, proven reliable and valid, and is aligned with the current Early Learning Standards. The state will not develop their own instrument but use one in existence nationally. If the standards are based on the Head Start Guidelines the Essential Domains of School Readiness will be included in the Guidelines. c) The initial pilot administration of the KEA will be used to determine if the KEA helps to plan instruction and improve programs for English learners and children with disabilities. The initial pilot administration of the KEA is to be the 3rd quarter of 2012. Full implementation is scheduled for the 4th quarter of 2013. The plan is for the KEA to be used to help plan kindergarten instruction. The results of the entry assessment will identify school readiness factors to be strengthened before the child enters school. d) The SLDS will be able to accept data input from the KEA in 2013. e) There is assurance of a source of funding for the KEA and the funds from this grant will not be used for this purpose. A plan is in place to have a Kindergarten Entry Assessment used for instruction by the end of the grant cycle. Plans provide the state a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that is valid, reliable, aligns with the Early Learning Standards, and can be reported in the data system to ensure data collection for program improvement. The KEA data will not be part of the SDLS until the end of the grant cycle. The Kindergarten Entry Assessment will be completed. The plan would be of higher quality to state how the information from the Kindergarten Entry Assessment will be used. This is a partially implemented plan with a medium quality response.

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.</b>	20	12

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to enhance the State's existing Statewide Longitudinal Data System or to build or enhance a separate, coordinated, early learning data system that aligns and is interoperable with the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and that either data system--

- (a) Has all of the Essential Data Elements;
- (b) Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs;
- (c) Facilitates the exchange of data among Participating State Agencies by using standard data structures, data formats, and data definitions such as Common Education Data Standards to ensure interoperability among the various levels and types of data;
- (d) Generates information that is timely, relevant, accessible, and easy for Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood Educators to use for continuous improvement and decision making; and
- (e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(2)
The TQRIS data system has the essential data elements of a unique Early Childhood Educator identifier, a unique program site identifier, ECE demographic information, and program level data on the quality of the program. The SLDS will be expanded to include secure student identification numbers. Program participation information will be in a data system with essential data for child demographics, as well as child-level data on development. All essential elements are addressed in a table but all essential elements are not described as being linked to the SLDS or another data system that will link with the SDLS. There does not appear to be a defined plan to link data systems for purposes of Early Childhood data. Oregon has several data collection systems available for early children and ECEs. The TQRIS is in process to become a central data collection site. It will eventually become linked to the SLDS. The timeline reports in the milestone column that the Interoperability with the SDLS cannot be ensured for the term of the grant. Current systems in use are the ALDER, CR, ORO, and CCRIS. The timeline for the data systems to update to adapt to the five tier system for the TQRIS available to participating agencies is the 3rd quarter of 2012 to the 1st quarter of 2015. Parts of the developing data collection systems may be used for continuous improvement and decision making but a cohesive system for data in one place to be accessible for ELDP and ECE to use for program improvement will not occur until the grant term is ended. All the data elements are not currently available to child care programs. This is partially implemented with a medium quality response.

	Available	Score
<b>Total Points Available for Selection Criteria</b>	280	188

**Priorities**

Competitive Preference Priorities

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</b>	10	6

Competitive Preference Priority 2 is designed to increase the number of children from birth to kindergarten entry who are participating in programs that are governed by the State's licensing system and quality standards, with the goal that all licensed or State-regulated programs will participate. The State will receive points for this priority based on the extent to which the State has in place, or has a High-Quality Plan to implement no later than June 30, 2015--

(a) A licensing and inspection system that covers all programs that are not otherwise regulated by the State and that regularly care for two or more unrelated children for a fee in a provider setting; provided that if the State exempts programs for reasons other than the number of children cared for, the State may exclude those entities and reviewers will score this priority only on the basis of non-excluded entities; and

(b) A Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System in which all licensed or State-regulated Early Learning and Development Programs participate.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (P)(2)**

All licensed child care providers currently participate in the TQRIS. The agencies that are not licensed and are exempt from licensing are Head Start, Early Head Start, Pre-K, and IDEA-funded ELDP. There is a plan to bring these programs into the TQRIS. The TQRIS will be accessible statewide after 2013. This plan is implemented with all licensed programs participating in the TQRIS. The plan to incorporate each program that serves Children with High Needs is general rather than specifically providing details to lead to significant numbers of Children with High Needs in the top tiers of the TQRIS.

Priorities

	Available	Yes/No
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry</b>	<b>0 or 10</b>	<b>No</b>

To meet this priority, the State must, in its application--

(a) Demonstrate that it has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1) by indicating that all elements in Status Table (A)(1)-12 are met; or

(b) Address selection criterion (E)(1) and earn a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.

**Comments on (P)(3)**

A Kindergarten Assessment has not been chosen but the plan to choose one is described in this application. The Kindergarten Entry Assessment will be chosen based on the criteria in the Status Table (A)(1)-12. Statewide implementation will occur by 2013.

Absolute Priority

	Mot? Yes/No
<b>Absolute Priority - Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.</b>	<b>Yes</b>

To meet this priority, the State's application must comprehensively and coherently address how the State will build a system that increases the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

The State's application must demonstrate how it will improve the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs by integrating and aligning resources and policies across Participating State Agencies and by designing and implementing a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. In addition, to achieve the necessary reforms, the State must make strategic improvements in those specific reform areas that will most significantly improve program quality and outcomes for Children with High Needs. Therefore, the State must address those criteria from within each of the Focused Investment Areas (sections (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children, (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce, and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress) that it believes will best prepare its Children with High Needs for kindergarten success.

**Comments on Absolute Priority**



The state's plan is built on their current commitment to Children with High Needs. The state has set forth a plan for improving and aligning Early Learning Standards and using these to promote training leading to higher qualified ECEs who will work with Children with High Needs. The TQRIS system will be expanded to lead to higher program quality for more children. Subsidies will be available for Children with High Needs to attend child care programs with higher ratings. Specific outcomes for Children with High Needs were included to a degree. A universal screening process to identify Children with High Needs is being developed. A pilot administration of the KEA will be used to determine if the KEA helps plan instruction and improve programs for children with disabilities and English Language Learners.



# Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Review



## Technical Review Form Page

Application # OR-5030

Peer Reviewer: [Redacted]  
Lead Monitor: [Redacted]  
Support Monitor: [Redacted]  
Application Status: Reviewed  
Date/Time: 11/16/2011 - 8:21 PM

### CORE AREAS (A) and (B)

States must address in their application all of the selection criteria in the Core Areas.

#### A. Successful State Systems

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development</b>	20	18
<p>The extent to which the State has demonstrated past commitment to and investment in high-quality, accessible Early Learning and Development Programs and services for Children with High Needs, as evidenced by the State's--</p> <p>(a) Financial investment, from January 2007 to the present, in Early Learning and Development Programs, including the amount of these investments in relation to the size of the State's population of Children with High Needs during this time period;</p> <p>(b) Increasing, from January 2007 to the present, the number of Children with High Needs participating in Early Learning and Development Programs.</p> <p>(c) Existing early learning and development legislation, policies, or practices, and</p> <p>(d) Current status in key areas that form the building blocks for a high quality early learning and development system, including Early Learning and Development Standards, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, health promotion practices, family engagement strategies, the development of Early Childhood Educators, Kindergarten Entry Assessments, and effective data practices.</p>		

Scoring Rubric Used: Quality

#### Comments on (A)(1)

(a) The applicant demonstrates a significant investment in early childhood through both past commitments as well as current investments. Generally, funding has progressively increased since 2007 to a total of over 136 million dollars reported in 2011. These funds represent a considerable financial commitment relative to the population of children with high needs at approximately \$1200.00 per child birth to five with low income. The state provides additional substantial evidence of supporting its population of children with high needs in poverty by supplementing spending for Head Start programs, growing from a zero dollar investment in 2007 to over \$238,000 in 2009. Increasing its investment further, the state more than doubled its Head Start funding in 2010, allocating \$715,000 to the program. The state further shows its support for early childhood development programs through state funded PreK which has also seen significant increases in funding since 2007. These investments have grown from 42 million in 2007 to over 61 million in 2011. Although 2010 showed a dip in state PreK funding, the 2011 appropriation of 61 million demonstrates the financial commitment by the legislative body, not only restoring funds to an earlier level, but also increasing the total amount. Further demonstrating its strong financial commitment to investing in early childhood, the state has exceeded its CCDF match dollars for all reported years. (b) The state has implemented several relevant policies in an attempt to broaden access to early childhood programs for families with high needs. The applicant states that its decision to raise income limits for employment related day care increased access from 26% to 68% of the child care market. Access to services for children in poverty increased by 2000 Head Start enrollment slots, and services to children with disabilities grew by 12.7% between 2007 and 2010. Although the number of children in poverty being served has greatly increased, it is unclear if the state has made any progress in increasing access to services to children with other high needs such as English language learners who make up 14.5% of the child population. (c) The applicant describes strong policies and legislative support for early learning and development. The state cites its report prepared in January 2011 by the Early Childhood and Family Investment Transition Team as the foundation for policy around improving early childhood services. The report mirrors many of the priorities outlined in the RTT notice, such as establishing a kindergarten entry assessment and implementing a statewide data system. In response to the report, the state created SB909 which outlines requirements that are listed as recommendations in the report. The SB909

legislation lays the groundwork for successful implementation of an early childhood reform agenda. Additionally, many of the policies emphasize integrated and coordinated efforts across services such as both education and health entities. (d) The applicant has effectively set the stage for a strong early childhood reform agenda with the passage of what appears to be landmark legislation. The passage of SB909 outlines an overhaul of the state's early childhood systems for the purpose of streamlining and integrating service delivery while also improving quality. However, this also puts the state in the early phases of development or revision as it attempts to redesign and implement all of the required changes. Some elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System are clearly in place. Head Start/Early Head Start as well as the Oregon PreK programs are all required to conduct developmental screening and data collected from children in EI/ECSE are collected, tracked and aggregated. However, other elements of a Comprehensive Assessment System are under development. The data table shows a variety of tools in place for formative assessment, depending on the program, but few details are provided as to their use statewide. Furthermore, a tiered quality rating system with meaningful distinctions of quality between levels is in the early phases of development. Much work is yet to be done to develop a comprehensive tool to rate program quality and support quality improvements. The state is also in the early phases of redesigning a kindergarten assessment strategy. The state is working on a variety of data collection methods, while also recognizing the need to develop uniform practices and procedures. The state currently collects and tracks certain data elements longitudinally such as data collected through the personnel registry. One component that appears to be well developed and in implementation is a system for supporting the early childhood workforce. The state has a working registry and numerous institutions of higher education that are aligned with the state's workforce framework. Although the system currently seems underdeveloped, the building blocks are being formed by working toward comprehensive program quality standards, integrated delivery of services, and a commitment to measuring outcomes, including implementation of a valid and reliable kindergarten assessment. Health promotion practices and family engagement strategies are fully embedded in the state's system as it currently exists. The state's TQRS model includes both components at the licensing level as well as within in the highest quality level of accreditation.

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.</b>	20	16

The extent to which the State clearly articulates a comprehensive early learning and development reform agenda that is ambitious yet achievable, builds on the State's progress to date (as demonstrated in selection criterion (A)(1)), is most likely to result in improved school readiness for Children with High Needs, and includes--

(a) Ambitious yet achievable goals for improving program quality, improving outcomes for Children with High Needs statewide, and closing the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers;

(b) An overall summary of the State Plan that clearly articulates how the High-Quality Plans proposed under each selection criterion, when taken together, constitute an effective reform agenda that establishes a clear and credible path toward achieving these goals; and

(c) A specific rationale that justifies the State's choice to address the selected criteria in each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E), including why these selected criteria will best achieve these goals.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

**Comments on (A)(2)**

(a) The state's goal of children entering school ready to learn is ambitious, yet will be difficult to determine if achieved. The goal is overly broad and not measurable, especially since the state currently has no valid or reliable kindergarten entry assessment tool. Additionally, the goals do not relate specifically to closing the readiness gap or improving program quality. Although the state has broad support for its reform agenda, too few elements of the system are in implementation for the goal to be achievable, thereby making the goals overly ambitious. (b) The state plan summary is well described and provides a clear outline for moving the state's reform agenda forward. Through development of shared goals focusing on school readiness across agencies, implementation of quality supports to early learning programs, and an integrated governance structure the state's plan effectively articulates how it will achieve its goals. Taken together, the strategies outlined provide a strong foundation for resulting in positive outcomes. (c) The applicant provides effective rationale for its chosen focused investment areas. The aim toward a set of common and well-aligned early learning standards (C[1]) allows for more consistent learning opportunities among children birth to five regardless of program or community, thereby working to close the achievement gap between children with high needs and those without risk factors. The applicant also cites that creating a common set of standards across early learning programs will set the stage for future use and alignment with other child and family support systems such as home visiting. Additionally, the state provides effective rationale for targeting early identification of families with high needs within the health systems (C[3]) by citing that nearly one half of all children born each year (40% of 45,000) are born with multiple risk factors such as low income or single parent status. The state makes a strong case for the importance of addressing health and other risk factors by noting that early intervention with families with multiple risk factors reduces later, more intensive and costly services. The state also provides sound reasoning for choosing to address a plan for a Workforce Competency Framework (D[1]) and professional development supports (D[2]). The state explains it has a strong foundation on which to build a more integrated system inclusive of cross-sector professionals working with young children so that the workforce shares a common understand of children and their needs. Finally, the state's desire to make data-driven decision-making a cornerstone of its reforms supports the choice of addressing the understanding of children's learning at kindergarten entry (E[1]) and enhancing its early learning data system (E[2]) as its final focused investment areas.

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>

The extent to which the State has established, or has a High-Quality Plan to establish, strong participation and commitment in the State Plan by Participating State Agencies and other early learning and development stakeholders by--

(a) Demonstrating how the Participating State Agencies and other partners, if any, will identify a governance structure for working together that will facilitate interagency coordination, streamline decision making, effectively allocate resources, and create long-term sustainability and describing--

(1) The organizational structure for managing the grant and how it builds upon existing interagency governance structures such as children's cabinets, councils, and commissions, if any already exist and are effective;

(2) The governance-related roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency, the State Advisory Council, each Participating State Agency, the State's Interagency Coordinating Council for part C of IDEA, and other partners, if any;

(3) The method and process for making different types of decisions (e.g., policy, operational) and resolving disputes; and

(4) The plan for when and how the State will involve representatives from Participating Programs, Early Childhood Educators or their representatives, parents and families, including parents and families of Children with High Needs, and other key stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the activities carried out under the grant;

(b) Demonstrating that the Participating State Agencies are strongly committed to the State Plan, to the governance structure of the grant, and to effective implementation of the State Plan, by including in the MOU or other binding agreement between the State and each Participating State Agency--

(1) Terms and conditions that reflect a strong commitment to the State Plan by each Participating State Agency, including terms and conditions designed to align and leverage the Participating State Agencies' existing funding to support the State Plan;

(2) "Scope-of-work" descriptions that require each Participating State Agency to implement all applicable portions of the State Plan and a description of efforts to maximize the number of Early Learning and Development Programs that become Participating Programs; and

(3) A signature from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency; and

(c) Demonstrating commitment to the State Plan from a broad group of stakeholders that will assist the State in reaching the ambitious yet achievable goals outlined in response to selection criterion (A)(2)(a), including by obtaining--

(1) Detailed and persuasive letters of intent or support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, and, if applicable, local early learning councils; and

(2) Letters of intent or support from such other stakeholders as Early Childhood Educators or their representatives; the State's legislators; local community leaders; State or local school boards; representatives of private and faith-based early learning programs; other State and local leaders (e.g., business, community, tribal, civil rights, education association leaders); adult education and family literacy State and local leaders; family and community organizations (e.g., parent councils, nonprofit organizations, local foundations, tribal organizations, and community-based organizations); libraries and children's museums; health providers; and postsecondary institutions.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

#### Comments on (A)(3)

(a) The state identifies a clear governance structure set forth by changes made through recent legislation. Sufficient information is provided describing how the governance will be maintained and supported by each of the participating agencies, though the system is still in development. Having a clear governance structure, especially one articulated in legislation, provides a platform for effective and efficient decision making. The applicant indicates that an Early Learning Council will provide system oversight with the Department of Health Services serving as lead agency and fiscal agent for the RTT ELC funds. The proposed structure streamlines oversight and service delivery. Additionally, the applicant demonstrates its ability to effectively facilitate coordination by defining clear roles and responsibilities in scopes of work of each of the MOUs presented. Though some of the structure is currently in the conceptualization phase, the intent is clear. The plan also includes general timelines for soliciting stakeholder feedback, including families, through a variety of venues. The plan effectively addresses collaboration with community providers, including Head Start and local boards via semi-annual hearings and town hall events. Though the state mentions families, it is unclear how the state realistically plans to garner parent input. Details as to how communication with families will be ensured, specifically families in more rural communities are not provided. (b) Content of MOUs successfully demonstrate state agency support. Each of the required elements are present and all are signed by the required leadership. The MOUs provide strong foundations for state agency



collaboration and participation, (c) Letters of support show significant support from a broad base of community stakeholders. Letters include support from agencies that represent the workforce as well as advocate groups. Both public and private entities demonstrate commitment to the state's plan through the letters of support.

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant.</b>	15	13

The extent to which the State Plan--

(a) Demonstrates how the State will use existing funds that support early learning and development from Federal, State, private, and local sources (e.g., CCDF; Title I and II of ESEA; IDEA; Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program; State preschool; Head Start Collaboration and State Advisory Council funding; Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program; Title V MCH Block Grant; TANF; Medicaid; child welfare services under Title IV (B) and (E) of the Social Security Act; Statewide Longitudinal Data System; foundation; other private funding sources) for activities and services that help achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, including how the quality set-asides in CCDF will be used.

(b) Describes, in both the budget tables and budget narratives, how the State will effectively and efficiently use funding from this grant to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, in a manner that--

- (1) Is adequate to support the activities described in the State Plan;
- (2) Includes costs that are reasonable and necessary in relation to the objectives, design, and significance of the activities described in the State Plan and the number of children to be served; and
- (3) Details the amount of funds budgeted for Participating State Agencies, localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners, and the specific activities to be implemented with these funds consistent with the State Plan, and demonstrates that a significant amount of funding will be devoted to the local implementation of the State Plan; and

(c) Demonstrates that it can be sustained after the grant period ends to ensure that the number and percentage of Children with High Needs served by Early Learning and Development Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

Scoring Rubric Used: Quality

**Comments on (A)(4)**

(a) The applicant adequately addresses how the state will use existing funds that support early learning and development. However, the newly formed Early Learning Council is "...reviewing how to merge, redesign or improve the coordination of..." programs and their funding sources. Therefore, some budget details, such as costs of specific activities, cannot be provided. Regardless of the limitations, the state offers an adequate description of many of the funding supports. For example, the state indicates that 2.7M from Project ALDER will be utilized to support development of the Early Childhood Data System. (b) The applicant indicates that the use of funds from this opportunity will be fully combined under the auspices of the Early Learning Council. Since dollars presented are inclusive of all funding to each agency they do not fully describe the use of funds specific to this grant opportunity. Overall, costs appear reasonable and necessary such as costs of personnel, training activities, and curricula development. The state also includes costs of validation and other evaluative studies to ensure the system decisions are working effectively. However, it is difficult to ascertain whether the costs are reasonable in relation to the number of children served. It does not appear that the state intends to increase the number of children served during the course of the funding period, but to maintain the approximately 44,500 children currently served in state funded programs. (c) Much of the work planned in the budgets is to develop the state's infrastructure, such as ensuring a valid and reliable tiered quality rating system. Because of the state's plan to focus on the activities that build infrastructure, many of the costs identified are one-time expenses, including validation and evaluative studies. Using the funding from this opportunity to build infrastructure demonstrates a sound strategy to ensure services can be sustained. The state has provided clear evidence of an ongoing financial commitment to early childhood, and the plan outlined will ensure the state can implement strong practices provided a solid foundation is put in place.

**B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs**

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</b>	10	6

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and adopted, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and adopt, a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System that--

(a) Is based on a statewide set of tiered Program Standards that include--

- (1) Early Learning and Development Standards;

- (2) A Comprehensive Assessment System;
- (3) Early Childhood Educator qualifications;
- (4) Family engagement strategies;
- (5) Health promotion practices; and
- (6) Effective data practices.

(b) Is clear and has standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program quality levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards that lead to improved learning outcomes for children; and

(c) Is linked to the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (B)(1)**

(a-b) The current state system for tiered rating includes three levels of quality with licensing as the first level and accreditation as the highest level. The middle tier identifies programs that meet the state's program quality standards. At the highest tier of accreditation, all of the components of quality indicators are addressed through the accreditation validation system. At the middle tier, the current program standards include family engagement strategies, early learning standards, and educator qualifications while minimally addressing adult/child interactions, environmental components and health and safety of the environment (though they do address health and hygiene practices with children). The state recognizes that the current standards and levels do not adequately discriminate variances in program quality as it proposes to use funds from this opportunity to develop a five-tiered system with differentiating characteristics of quality. The proposed plan generally seems to include most of the key areas of quality necessary, though few details are provided as to how several of the components will be integrated into the system or if the state intends to update/revise the current program standards. The state is moving in a positive direction for developing a meaningful tiered system, but some elements of the plan, such as issues of environmental quality and creating a true progression of quality, need greater thought. (c) The state provides adequate linkages between licensing and the tiered rating system. It appears that all licensed programs are reviewed by licensing specialists who collect program quality data on each of the licensed programs. However, the state has disjointed rules regarding what types of programs must be licensed. The state is in the process of working to revise licensing standards and has conducted a recent analysis with a report due in December 2011. With the recommendations of the report yet unknown, the direction that licensing will take is uncertain. The state's plan provides insufficient evidence of a set of key activities that would effectively lead to aligned program standards and licensing requirements. With a tiered rating system currently in place, but which does not address all of the required components or adequately differentiate levels of quality, the response reflects partial implementation.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</b>	15	8

The extent to which the State has maximized, or has a High-Quality Plan to maximize, program participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Implementing effective policies and practices to reach the goal of having all publicly funded Early Learning and Development Programs participate in such a system, including programs in each of the following categories--

- (1) State-funded preschool programs;
- (2) Early Head Start and Head Start programs;
- (3) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA;
- (4) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA; and
- (5) Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program;

(b) Implementing effective policies and practices designed to help more families afford high-quality child care and maintain the supply of high-quality child care in areas with high concentrations of Children with High Needs (e.g., maintaining or increasing subsidy reimbursement rates, taking actions to ensure affordable co-payments, providing incentives to high-quality providers to participate in the subsidy program); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for the numbers and percentages of Early Learning and Development Programs that will participate in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by type of Early Learning and Development Program (as listed in (B)(2)(a)(1) through (5) above).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (B)(2)**

(a) The state is working to achieve maximum participation by embedding TQRIS policies with licensing regulations. However, the licensing regulations are not universally required by all state funded programs such as those supported through ESEA, Title I or Parts B or C of IDEA. It also appears that certain state funded PreK and/or Head Start programs do not require licensure. Therefore, participation in the TQRIS may not be fully maximized through this strategy. CCDF funds support mostly family care providers who are typically exempt from licensing as well. Although the state is working to revise these limitations, the results of the recommended changes remain uncertain. (b) The state has made significant investments in assisting families with program affordability. Several policies have been implemented to support parents such as raising the income eligibility limits to 185% of federal poverty levels and decreasing required family copays. The state indicates that it has some of the most generous policies in the nation. Although the state has taken great strides to increase access to care, it has not adequately addressed the issue of access to high quality care. Policies do not appear to encourage families to seek out higher rated programs. (c) The state provides ambitious targets of 100% participation by certain program types in a short period of time. Considering the status of licensing and the desired five tier system, these targets may not be fully achievable or realistic. Once the components of the system are determined and fully developed, the state's plan to utilize an integrated approach to quality indicator data collection may be adequate to fully realize the state's participation goals. However, until development is further along, it seems overly ambitious to work toward 100% participation in less than 2 years.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs</b>	15	9

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for rating and monitoring the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Using a valid and reliable tool for monitoring such programs, having trained monitors whose ratings have an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability, and monitoring and rating the Early Learning and Development Programs with appropriate frequency; and

(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs (e.g., displaying quality rating information at the program site) and making program quality rating data, information, and licensing history (including any health and safety violations) publicly available in formats that are easy to understand and use for decision making by families selecting Early Learning and Development Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

#### Comments on (B)(3)

(a) The applicant describes a unique and potentially efficient process for rating and monitoring quality by using licensing teams to observe and collect data on programs related to "structural indicators of quality." These teams input information regarding structural indicators of quality into a data system that uses a statistical software to determine quality scores. Teams also conduct portfolio reviews. Although the state indicates that specialists receive appropriate training, ensuring reliability with the use of a portfolio based system of evidence is difficult. The state does not provide adequate assurances (such as supervised observations, scoring comparisons, etc) that measures are taken to verify inter-rater reliability beyond the initial training activities. Lack of such assurances raises concerns regarding use of bias and inconsistent evaluations for rating. While the state indicates that the program standards have been validated, how those standards will be measured in a revised five-tier system is unclear. The applicant indicates that it will monitor programs every three years and will require programs to submit annual data and reporting. This schedule aligns with Head Start reviews. The timing appears adequate relative to the number of programs planned for participation, the cost of monitoring, and the alignment of state monitoring with other oversight groups and entities. (b) The applicant proposes many strategies which may be effective for providing families with information. The state describes working with a consultant firm to forward a social networking strategy while also designing signage for licensed programs to post. The plan for marketing to families is adequate for portions of the target population. The applicant also states that these strategies are appropriate for other high needs populations such as English language learners and those on tribal lands, though the plan does not specify how the strategy and these target groups are connected. The planned strategies for communicating with families across the state seems somewhat narrow as it emphasizes the use of technology to communicate. It is uncertain that the populations to which the strategy is targeted have access to technology or use it in a way that this strategy would be effective. The procedures outlined in the response for monitoring and providing information to families as part of the system reflect substantial implementation.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs</b>	20	18

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for improving the quality of the Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development Programs to continuously improve (e.g., through training, technical assistance, financial rewards or incentives, higher subsidy reimbursement rates, compensation);

(b) Providing supports to help working families who have Children with High Needs access high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs that meet those needs (e.g., providing full-day, full-year programs; transportation; meals; family support services); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing--

(1) The number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System; and

(2) The number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

**Scoring Rubric Used: Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (B)(4)**

(a) Several established state policies put the applicant in a good position to support continuous improvement among early childhood programs. The most significant policy is that all licensed programs participate in the state TQIRIS system. Past success in aligning regulations and quality efforts provide evidence that the state has the necessary support to create additional connections between early learning program policies, such as subsidy reimbursement rates, and a quality rating system. Such connections are critical in implementing incentives for moving programs to higher tiers. The state is also in process of establishing new rules regarding the types of programs that require licensure while concurrently aligning licensing regulations with Head Start performance standards. Creating a more integrated regulatory system will strengthen the consistency of policy implementation statewide as the newly designed rating system is developed. Strong supports also exist regarding improving credentials and education of early childhood providers which in turn will support program quality improvement. In 2009, the state reports that its incentives for education strategy resulted in an additional 2,882 early childhood educators attaining at least a step 3 (of 12) on the Oregon Registry. Finally, the state reports that it will implement a model of coaching and technical assistance based on self-assessment results and scores regarding the state's indicators of quality. Use of assessment to guide improvement is a best practice strategy which should prove effective in moving programs through a process of continuous improvement. (b) The applicant has established policies that provide a good foundation on which to build even greater supports for families. The state's subsidy program is currently linked with the Head Start programs which allows for availability of wrap around services for eligible families. This connection is a good start, though with the current status of licensure, Head Start programs are neither licensed nor required to participate in the state TQIRIS. The applicant proposes to move in this direction, however, and once licensure and TQIRIS revisions have been made, this linkage will support more families receiving high quality early childhood services. The applicant also has an adequate plan to include special populations. Of particular interest is the work to better provide for children on tribal lands and Oregon's urban Native population. The state indicates that it will convene a meeting inclusive of representatives of each of the state's nine tribes to discuss strategies for working in this area. Additionally, the state indicates that it will work to increase the number of licensed family care programs on tribal lands. The intent here is good, though how these activities will actually be accomplished is not yet determined. (c) The targets set by the state for the number of programs in the top tiers of the quality rating system are ambitious, though likely unrealistic. The applicant has no defined system by which each of the tiers will be identified since a significant portion of this funding is planned for the development of a five tier system. The state believes that once its state funded Head Start and PreK programs are licensed, they will have 100% participation in TQIRIS and there is a presumption by the applicant that each of these programs will be in the top tiers of the system. Without evidence supporting the idea that each of the Head Start programs will automatically be of high quality (i.e. currently accredited, identified as Head Start programs of excellence, etc.), it is more realistic to consider there will be varying levels of quality across the state programs as well as the previously licensed programs. Although the total numbers seem overly ambitious, the rate of 10% of programs increasing quality does seem to be both ambitious and achievable based on the plan. The number of children from special populations other than those living in poverty in high quality programs seems to be minimal in relation to the number of programs moving across the continuum. According to the data table, the state proposes that by end of the year 2013, only 7% of children with disabilities funded through Part B of IDEA and only 8% of children with disabilities funded through Part C of IDEA will be provided care in high quality settings based on the top tiers of the rating system. These targets seem low relative to the overall performance targets set.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(5) Validating the effectiveness of the State Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.</b>	15	12

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to design and implement evaluations--working with an independent evaluator and, when warranted, as part of a cross-State evaluation consortium--of the relationship between the ratings generated by the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and the learning outcomes of children served by the State's Early Learning and Development Programs by--

(a) Validating, using research-based measures, as described in the State Plan (which also describes the criteria that the State used or will use to determine those measures), whether the tiers in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System accurately reflect differential levels of program quality; and

(b) Assessing, using appropriate research designs and measures of progress (as identified in the State Plan), the extent to which changes in quality ratings are related to progress in children's learning, development, and school readiness.



Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

**Comments on (B)(5)**

(a-b) Overall, the state presents an effective research design to evaluate whether the state's tiers adequately differentiate program quality. The state outlines appropriate research questions and sampling methods. The state's plan to employ an iterative research process incorporating data to inform the development of the five tier system aligns well with current recommended practices. The plan lacks some relevant details as to the specific measurements to be used beyond the CLASS instrument and the yet to be developed kindergarten entry assessment instrument. The CLASS is a valid and reliable tool to measure teacher/child interactions, however; the state does not provide for a valid measure to understand other environmental components of quality. Additionally, the state's kindergarten assessment has yet to be developed and determined valid and reliable. In addition, the state's design indicates that it will measure child progress between 2013 and 2014. However, the state does not identify a common measurement tool for assessing child progress across the program sample. Without a measure of kindergarten assessment or a common child assessment tool in place, determining the connection between child progress and program quality may prove difficult.

**Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E)**

Each State must address in its application--

- (1) Two or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (C);
- (2) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D); and
- (3) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E)

The total available points for each Focused Investment Area will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that area, so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points.

**C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children**

The total available points that an applicant may receive for selection criteria (C)(1) through (C)(4) is 60. The 60 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address all four selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 15 points. If the applicant chooses to address two selection criteria, each criterion will be worth up to 30 points.

The applicant must address at least two of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>27</b>

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to put in place high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards that are used statewide by Early Learning and Development Programs and that--

- (a) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate across each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, and that they cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness;
- (b) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics;
- (c) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are incorporated in Program Standards, curricula and activities, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and professional development activities; and
- (d) The State has supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to the Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (C)(1)**

(a) The state's early learning and development standards sufficiently demonstrate a comprehensive set of standards that are culturally and linguistically appropriate and include all of the essential domains of learning. Although the state is in transition regarding revision of its early learning standards to align with the newly adopted common core standards, and the newly presented Head Start framework, the plan to integrate them is sound. The state recognizes the need to not only align the standards for 3-5 year olds, but also to then revise its birth to three guidelines. (b) The state's current standards have been thoroughly aligned with the K-3 academic standards in place at the time of development. The state has recently adopted the Common Core standards and is in process of ensuring alignment of the Head Start framework and the Common Core standards. The state indicates that it has completed a preliminary review of the language and math content areas and that they have found strong alignment. Based on the evidence presented regarding the level of detail in the previous alignment as well as the indicators of the professional competency framework, it is highly likely that the state will continue to provide well aligned standards across content areas once the revisions are complete. (c) The state sufficiently demonstrates

that Early Learning and Development standards are incorporated across the system, and the state provides evidence of workforce competencies that are inclusive of knowledge of early learning standards. Additionally, there is sufficient evidence that the indicators of program quality for the state include objectives related to the classroom use of standards in curriculum development. (d) The key activities outlined in the state plan demonstrate minimal supports to promote understanding of early learning standards. The state describes the use of online and webinar training systems during the roll out phase with only two regional training opportunities. The state plans to undertake a significant revision of its standards moving away from a comprehensive set of birth to three standards to separate birth to three and three to five early learning standards. The extensive revisions planned will likely take more intensive training and technical assistance supports than are described.

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.</b>	30	27

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs by—

(a) Establishing a progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety; ensuring that health and behavioral screening and follow-up occur; and promoting children's physical, social, and emotional development across the levels of its Program Standards;

(b) Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained and supported on an on-going basis in meeting the health standards;

(c) Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity; and

(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who—

(1) Are screened using Screening Measures that align with the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment benefit (see section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act) or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (42 CFR 457.520), and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA (see sections 612(a)(3) and 635(a)(5) of IDEA);

(2) Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and where appropriate, received follow-up; and

(3) Participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care, including the number of children who are up to date in a schedule of well-child care.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (C)(3)**

(a) The state's plan for identifying and addressing the health needs of young children strongly emphasizes early identification through improved screening and referral procedures. The state's plan outlines activities for implementing recommended procedures and developing curricula for training of the health and early childhood workforce. The strategies are well aligned with recommended practices and support an integrated health model of service delivery. The state offers many opportunities for early childhood educators to learn about the promotion of health and safety with young children. The state indicates that all regulated settings must participate in a training curriculum based on the Caring for Our Children manual that includes strategies for promoting physical and social-emotional development. However, the state's plan provides a weak description of a progression health and safety related program standards that providers must meet. Although the applicant states that TQIRS participants would move through the tiers as they demonstrate higher degrees of implementation, no further definition of how health practices would be demonstrated is provided. (b) The applicant has a well-established system for training early childhood providers on health and safety practices. The state describes a proposed plan to add screening practices into the training system so as to include early identification as a fundamental component of health promotion. In addition to the current avenues for providing health promotion information, the state describes its plan to develop an electronic version (CD) of the safety handbook and quick reference to the guide in paper format. Plans are also underway to include availability of handheld mobile devices as well making information more accessible to a wide array of providers. (c) The state demonstrates effective integration of promoting children's healthy eating and nutrition into its early childhood system. The state's program standards have established criteria that include educating children on healthy eating habits. The state is also in process of developing standardized curricula related to reducing childhood obesity and through nutrition and exercise. (d) The state appears to be well on its way to implementing a strong system of screening and early identification. Several projects through other funding sources are bringing stakeholders together to drive policy and practice changes regarding screening activities, especially with children who have high needs served through state funded health care initiatives. Therefore the targets identified related to use of screening and participation in ongoing health care seem highly attainable and appropriate relative to the strategies outlined. Ensuring children with high needs are screened at regular and appropriate intervals appears to be a high priority for the state. Further development of referral systems and ensuring follow up of treatment or intervention may be needed to fully meet the targets for referral and follow up activities. The applicant discusses some procedures for referral, but offers little information regarding standardized referral procedures or how follow up will be conducted and/or tracked once families are referred.

**D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce**

The total points that a State may earn for selection criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (D), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.</b>	20	20

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to--

- (a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes;
- (b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and
- (c) Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (b)(1)**

(a) Oregon has a well-developed, statewide competency and knowledge framework for early childhood educators that was established in 1998. The framework is used for most professional development opportunities for individuals working in the various types of early learning and development programs. Most educational institutions throughout the state report that their curricula for early childhood are aligned with the state's competency and knowledge framework. (b) The state provides early childhood educators with a registry system to document training and education. The registry outlines 12 steps of progressively increasing educational attainment. The registry system is highly utilized and fully connected to the various forms of professional development opportunities. For example, the state has agreements with the community colleges and universities to incorporate the registry steps in the degree attainment process. (c) Although the applicant has a well developed workforce development system, the state reports that many entities such as Head Start and early intervention programs continue to run parallel professional development activities. The additional professional development opportunities may or may not be aligned with the state's competency framework. The many planned policy changes for the state, such as in licensing requirements and adoption of the Head Start outcomes framework, may provide the necessary actions to integrate all the systems. Through stronger integration of professional development activities, the state stands ready to implement a comprehensive and statewide workforce support plan.

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.</b>	20	19

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to improve the effectiveness and retention of Early Childhood Educators who work with Children with High Needs, with the goal of improving child outcomes by--

- (a) Providing and expanding access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework;
- (b) Implementing policies and incentives (e.g., scholarships, compensation and wage supplements, tiered reimbursement rates, other financial incentives, management opportunities) that promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and that are designed to increase retention;
- (c) Publicly reporting aggregated data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention; and
- (d) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for--
  - (1) Increasing the number of postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number of Early Childhood Educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and
  - (2) Increasing the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (D)(2)**

(a) The applicant implements a comprehensive professional development system using a wide variety of learning modalities from web based classes to individual coaching. The applicant successfully builds on its array of training and education opportunities by continuing to increase capacity around the number of qualified training professionals with whom the state contracts. The state's system has been in place for more than 8 years and continues to develop, recently adding a credential related directly to the care of infants and toddlers. The state provides sufficient evidence of access to high quality professional development citing that all 11 of the state's community colleges and over 570 registered trainers offer activities fully aligned with the state's competency framework. (b) The applicant describes a strong incentives program to promote professional development. Early childhood educators may access education and training through numerous methods. Scholarship dollars are available through community foundation and can be used for any number of educational activities such as foreign language translation of transcripts, CDA credentialing, etc. (c) To date, the current registry database has provided some limitations due to the voluntary nature of the system. The state recently established the Oregon Registry Online which will collect and track personnel information regarding ongoing training and education and electronically link information to licensed program in which a registered professional works. The registry has been designed to track data, though to date it does not appear that the information is publicly reported or available. (d) The state is well on its way to meeting its goals for the workforce. All of the state's community colleges currently offer programs that are fully aligned with the state's framework. The state identifies ambitious targets for increasing the number of registered trainers and engaging additional state universities. The state's target for increasing the number of professionals in the registry at a credentialed level is highly ambitious looking to increase by 50% of the current participants in the next year. Additionally, the state has appropriately ambitious targets for increasing the skills of the workforce. The clear alignment of state systems and wide availability of state trainers provide the strategies needed for ensuring targets are attainable and achievable.

**E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress**

*The total points an applicant may earn for selection criteria (E)(1) and (E)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.*

*The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (E), which are as follows:*

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>12</b>
<p>The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to implement, independently or as part of a cross-State consortium, a common, statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment that informs instruction and services in the early elementary grades and that--</p> <p>(a) Is aligned with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;</p> <p>(b) Is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for English learners and children with disabilities;</p> <p>(c) Is administered beginning no later than the start of school year 2014-2015 to children entering a public school kindergarten; States may propose a phased implementation plan that forms the basis for broader statewide implementation;</p> <p>(d) Is reported to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and to the early learning data system, if it is separate from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, as permitted under and consistent with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws; and</p> <p>(e) Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources other than those available under this grant, (e.g., with funds available under section 6111 or 6112 of the ESEA).</p>		

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (E)(1)**

(a) The state's proposed plan to develop and implement a kindergarten assessment demonstrates clear intent to have strong alignment between the state's early learning and K-12 standards as well as cover all the essential domains of school readiness. The assessment instrument is a significant priority of the state's agenda and is identified as such in recent legislation. The legislation establishing the policy of using kindergarten assessment includes clear directions for the instrument to include all the essential domains of school readiness. (b) The state proposes a plan that will adequately support the development of a valid and reliable tool. The state provides a timeline for conducting pilot studies, making revisions, and further validating the assessment instrument. In addition, the committee being convened to guide the tool development will represent individuals with knowledge of



the state's standards and curricula thereby increasing the likelihood of developing a valid tool. (c) The state proposes an effective timeline that will ensure a kindergarten assessment instrument will be administered by the required date. The state's plan includes a pilot study to be conducted during the fall of 2012 and statewide rollout the following year. The timeline is ambitious, though driven by the high priority of the activity to support the total early childhood agenda for the state. (d) The state has a clear intent to collect data and aggregate the assessment with the statewide longitudinal data system. The state is in a good position to move forward in this area. All children in state PreK, Head Start, early intervention, and kindergarten receive unique identifiers, a necessary first step in collecting reliable data. Additionally, the state has an established web-based system for assessment data entry, though it is unclear how this might be used with a newly adopted assessment instrument. (e) The state adequately identifies resources to support the development of a kindergarten assessment instrument. During the 2011 legislative session, a special purpose allocation of 16M was made, with a portion of the funds intended for the development of the kindergarten assessment tool. The state also identifies a Ford Family Foundation pledge. However, the state does not identify a total estimated cost, nor the specific amounts provided from the additional resources. Therefore, it is unclear if the 500,000.00 allocated from this funding is supported "in significant part" with other resources. Overall, the state identifies a high quality plan for developing kindergarten assessment. The timeline is ambitious, but incorporates the various steps necessary for successful development and implementation such as pilot studies, validation, and training. The response reflects the state's intent to develop an assessment, but one is not currently implemented or in use.

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>15</b>

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to enhance the State's existing Statewide Longitudinal Data System or to build or enhance a separate, coordinated, early learning data system that aligns and is interoperable with the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and that either data system--

- (a) Has all of the Essential Data Elements;
- (b) Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs;
- (c) Facilitates the exchange of data among Participating State Agencies by using standard data structures, data formats, and data definitions such as Common Education Data Standards to ensure interoperability among the various levels and types of data;
- (d) Generates information that is timely, relevant, accessible, and easy for Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood Educators to use for continuous improvement and decision making; and
- (e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (E)(2)**

(a) The applicant demonstrates that it is well underway in development and utilization of an interoperable early learning data system. The state currently uses its SLDS and its child care regulatory information system to collect each of the required essential data elements. The state's plan effectively proposes to bring these systems together and link data so that children's learning outcomes can be tracked and efficaciousness of publicly funded programs can more accurately be assessed. The state's goals for its plan to create an early learning data system successfully build on the networks and processes currently in place and demonstrate a clear path to an integrated and coordinated data collection and reporting component. (b-c) The state currently implements a variety of data collection activities. The state provides adequate assurances that uniform data practices will be employed. The state explains that it will utilize its state data team as a governance structure providing oversight of the enhanced system development. The state's system currently provides a robust infrastructure. The state is using four grants together to support the building of a data system that effectively allows agencies to exchange information. The state's plan for adding a TQRIS web based system to the process indicates clear intent to ensure exchanges of information from TQRIS will also be easily accessed. (d) The applicant proposes a plan that adequately addresses the generation of relevant reports for program quality improvement. The state indicates that the system being developed is web-based and since providers submit data on their own, reports are accessible to them as well. The plan proposed allows for programs to access information about program quality in relation to structural indicators such as teacher education and child/staff ratios. However, it is unclear how the system will be developed and utilized to support children's learning and development outcomes. The plan does not outline how data related to program and family demographics, child outcomes, and quality ratings will be connected to inform continuous improvement and decision making. (e) The applicant offers adequate assurances that the data system oversight requirements will be met. The applicant describes an early learning data team that is used to ensure alignment with state systems. The applicant further states that it will continue to use the Data Management Association guidance as it further develops its systems. These processes seem adequate to ensure appropriate compliance.

	Available	Score
<b>Total Points Available for Selection Criteria</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>229</b>

**Priorities**

Competitive Preference Priorities

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</b>	10	6
<p>Competitive Preference Priority 2 is designed to increase the number of children from birth to kindergarten entry who are participating in programs that are governed by the State's licensing system and quality standards, with the goal that all licensed or State-regulated programs will participate. The State will receive points for this priority based on the extent to which the State has in place, or has a High-Quality Plan to implement no later than June 30, 2015--</p> <p>(a) A licensing and inspection system that covers all programs that are not otherwise regulated by the State and that regularly care for two or more unrelated children for a fee in a provider setting; provided that if the State exempts programs for reasons other than the number of children cared for, the State may exclude those entities and reviewers will score this priority only on the basis of non-excluded entities; and</p> <p>(b) A Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System in which all licensed or State-regulated Early Learning and Development Programs participate.</p> <p>Scoring Rubric Used: <b>Quality and Implementation</b></p>		
<b>Comments on (P)(2)</b>		
<p>(a) The state provides insufficient evidence of a licensing system that covers all programs caring for two or more unrelated children. The state is in process of revising its licensing structure based on recommendations from a recent report. However, since this is only a recommendation and it is uncertain what might result, this priority is not yet met. (b) The applicant provides a plan that adequately addresses statewide participation of all licensed programs in the TQRIS. The state currently collects quality indicator data as part of licensing visits and therefore, all licensed programs participate in the TQRIS in some manner. However, it is unclear that all programs are rated for quality or if all programs participate in improvement efforts. Additionally, many of the state-regulated, unlicensed early learning and development programs such as Head Start and State PreK do not yet participate in the state's TQRIS. The state does propose licensing rule changes that will result in these programs having 100% participation, but the results of those changes are not guaranteed at this time.</p>		

Priorities

	Available	Yes/No
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry</b>	0 or 10	No
<p>To meet this priority, the State must, in its application--</p> <p>(a) Demonstrate that it has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1) by indicating that all elements in Status Table (A)(1)-12 are met, or</p> <p>(b) Address selection criterion (E)(1) and earn a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.</p>		
<b>Comments on (P)(3)</b>		
<p>The state meets neither indicator related to the priority.</p>		

Absolute Priority

	Met? Yes/No
<b>Absolute Priority - Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.</b>	Yes
<p>To meet this priority, the State's application must comprehensively and coherently address how the State will build a system that increases the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed.</p> <p>The State's application must demonstrate how it will improve the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs by integrating and aligning resources and policies across Participating State Agencies and by designing and implementing a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. In addition, to achieve the necessary reforms, the State must make strategic improvements in those specific reform areas</p>	

that will most significantly improve program quality and outcomes for Children with High Needs. Therefore, the State must address those criteria from within each of the Focused Investment Areas (sections (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children, (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce, and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress) that it believes will best prepare its Children with High Needs for kindergarten success.

#### **Comments on Absolute Priority**

Overall, the state supplies a plan that is intended to improve the quality of early learning and development programs. The state offers strategies to streamline service delivery and focus on outcomes and use of data. The state has many challenges to resolve such as the revision of its licensing system, the revamping of its quality rating system, and the development of a kindergarten assessment process. Comprehensively, the state's plan outlines strategies that support taking on its challenges. Improvements to the quality rating system will provide a strong foundation to identify quality early learning programs and move providers across a continuum of improvement. Consolidating the system under a single agency also supports the state's goals for integrating and aligning its resources. While the strategies proposed to address these challenges apply to all of the state's children, many of the key activities relate more directly to children with high needs such as implementation of a stronger early identification system and licensing revisions to include currently exempt Head Start programs. The state plan provides clear evidence of statewide, public and private support for a strong early childhood reform agenda that targets children with high needs. Such support is needed to forward several of the strategies proposed. The state has submitted an ambitious plan to improve learning and reduce the achievement gap among Oregon's youngest children, but with a clear vision and an overall well thought out plan.



Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge Review

Technical Review Form Page



Application # OR-5030

Peer Reviewer: [Redacted]
Lead Monitor: [Redacted]
Support Monitor: [Redacted]
Application Status: Reviewed
Date/Time: 11/16/2011 - 9:13 AM

CORE AREAS (A) and (B)

States must address in their application all of the selection criteria in the Core Areas.

A. Successful State Systems

Table with 3 columns: Core Area, Available, Score. Row 1: (A)(1) Demonstrating past commitment to early learning and development, 20, 20. Includes sub-points (a) through (d) regarding financial investment, participation numbers, existing legislation, and current system status.

Scoring Rubric Used: Quality

Comments on (A)(1)

The applicant has demonstrated a strong past commitment to early learning and development. Indications of this include (a) pre-kindergarten funding expansion of \$39 million, resulting in twice as many children receiving state support, (b) doubling the number of Early Head Start grantees over the past five years, (c) an increase of more than 4 million dollars for early intervention and early childhood special education, along with increases in child care subsidies, tax credit for child care, relief nurseries, and home visiting. This combination of programs, and the fiscal increases to them, indicates a strong financial investment and the applicant's commitment to young children, including those with high needs. The applicant has demonstrated an increase of 12.7% in the number of children in the Special Education Child count. The applicant provided information about the plan to integrate services which will reduce duplication and waste, leaving more financial support for young children. This indicates a strong commitment to serving young children, especially children with High Needs. The applicant provides information about the current state legislation, policies and practices that support their commitment to ELD. The Governor's Early Childhood and Family Transition Report will drive the policy systems changes that are proposed. Currently, the Early Learning Council consists of five state agencies and more than eight existing structures and coordination councils that will merge to provide a single oversight authority. This demonstrates quality by reducing duplication of work and possible confusion of standards. Of note is the Governor's Early Learning initiative that has provided a structure to create a common Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework. This will streamline efforts and provide a strong base from which programs can work collaboratively to meet the goals as outlined. The applicant provides information about the state's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS), which has been in use since 2008. Updates and improvements have been made to the system since its inception. The applicant addresses further changes that will be addressed if RTT-ELC funds are awarded. Currently, all Head Start programs in the state use the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework and are expected to implement a program that addresses child development across a wide variety of developmental domains. This framework will be considered for adoption by all early childhood programs, which will further enhance consistency. The state currently uses high-quality measures of child assessment (the Assessment, Evaluation and Programming System for Infants and Children [AEPS] and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire



[ASQ]). State health reform practices are addressed by a plan to address life span health issues. Family engagement strategies, including an annual public review of early learning services and systems will be reviewed in public formats, indicating a willingness to address both successes and concerns on an ongoing basis. Similarly, the development of early childhood educators has been addressed since 1993 and continues to be part of the improvement plan. The proposal addresses the state's need to implement a Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA). The proposal indicates that no KEA is currently in use, following suspension of use of the previous instrument in 2010. This indicates a willingness to address issues of concern and to change what is not working to the benefit of young children; this is seen as a strength of the proposal. Linked data systems are discussed and current work is devoted to integrating the system more fully. All key areas provide evidence of the applicant's current commitment to high quality work and its desire to work to strengthen the system.

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(2) Articulating the State's rationale for its early learning and development reform agenda and goals.</b>	20	18

The extent to which the State clearly articulates a comprehensive early learning and development reform agenda that is ambitious yet achievable, builds on the State's progress to date (as demonstrated in selection criterion (A)(1)), is most likely to result in improved school readiness for Children with High Needs, and includes--

- (a) Ambitious yet achievable goals for improving program quality, improving outcomes for Children with High Needs statewide, and closing the readiness gap between Children with High Needs and their peers;
- (b) An overall summary of the State Plan that clearly articulates how the High-Quality Plans proposed under each selection criterion, when taken together, constitute an effective reform agenda that establishes a clear and credible path toward achieving these goals; and
- (c) A specific rationale that justifies the State's choice to address the selected criteria in each Focused Investment Area (C), (D), and (E), including why these selected criteria will best achieve these goals.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

**Comments on (A)(2)**

The applicant outlines three important goals and supporting guiding principles that support progress toward a comprehensive Early Learning and Development (ELD) system. Both the goals and principles demonstrate a commitment to integrate best practice into the proposed work. The ambitious goals outlined will address the need to improve outcomes for Children with High Needs and to close the readiness gap between children with High Needs and their peers. The goals are broad, however and this makes their measurement more challenging. The application indicates an awareness that inequities, even those experienced before birth, influence outcomes for children. Addressing these inequities in ELD programs will close the readiness gap between children with High Needs and their peers by addressing their most pressing needs. The Governor's Early Childhood Reform initiative includes a reform agenda that addresses a wide variety of important tasks from ensuring a shared focus to integrating governance and resources. Implementation of this plan will strengthen and integrate services to young children, including children with High Needs. Specific tasks such as implementation of a universal screening system, adopting common standards and implementation of a Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) are evidence of the plan to follow a clear and credible path to achieving the goals. The proposal addresses the need for standard screening tools, but does not indicate which tools are currently in place nor does it indicate which tools, if any, are currently under consideration for screening child development. Screenings are planned at universal touchpoints for families, with consideration of family-friendly and culturally appropriate practices. Strong evidence is provided for the applicant's choices of seven specific projects; the applicant clearly articulates a decision to address issues at a systematic, not pilot-project level. The plan focuses on key building blocks of the system that will be self-sufficient after the grant period ends. This is seen as a good use of grant funds. Building synergy and capacity using temporary funds will pay dividends for a long time.

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(3) Aligning and coordinating early learning and development across the State</b>	10	8

The extent to which the State has established, or has a High-Quality Plan to establish, strong participation and commitment in the State Plan by Participating State Agencies and other early learning and development stakeholders by--

- (a) Demonstrating how the Participating State Agencies and other partners, if any, will identify a governance structure for working together that will facilitate interagency coordination, streamline decision making, effectively allocate resources, and create long-term sustainability and describing--
  - (1) The organizational structure for managing the grant and how it builds upon existing interagency governance structures such as children's cabinets, councils, and commissions, if any already exist and are effective;
  - (2) The governance-related roles and responsibilities of the Lead Agency, the State Advisory Council, each Participating State Agency, the State's Interagency Coordinating Council for part C of IDEA, and other partners, if any;

(3) The method and process for making different types of decisions (e.g., policy, operational) and resolving disputes; and

(4) The plan for when and how the State will involve representatives from Participating Programs, Early Childhood Educators or their representatives, parents and families, including parents and families of Children with High Needs, and other key stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the activities carried out under the grant;

(b) Demonstrating that the Participating State Agencies are strongly committed to the State Plan, to the governance structure of the grant, and to effective implementation of the State Plan, by including in the MOU or other binding agreement between the State and each Participating State Agency--

(1) Terms and conditions that reflect a strong commitment to the State Plan by each Participating State Agency, including terms and conditions designed to align and leverage the Participating State Agencies' existing funding to support the State Plan;

(2) "Scope-of-work" descriptions that require each Participating State Agency to implement all applicable portions of the State Plan and a description of efforts to maximize the number of Early Learning and Development Programs that become Participating Programs; and

(3) A signature from an authorized representative of each Participating State Agency; and

(c) Demonstrating commitment to the State Plan from a broad group of stakeholders that will assist the State in reaching the ambitious yet achievable goals outlined in response to selection criterion (A)(2)(a), including by obtaining--

(1) Detailed and persuasive letters of intent or support from Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, and, if applicable, local early learning councils; and

(2) Letters of intent or support from such other stakeholders as Early Childhood Educators or their representatives; the State's legislators; local community leaders; State or local school boards; representatives of private and faith-based early learning programs; other State and local leaders (e.g., business, community, tribal, civil rights, education association leaders); adult education and family literacy State and local leaders; family and community organizations (e.g., parent councils, nonprofit organizations, local foundations, tribal organizations, and community-based organizations); libraries and children's museums; health providers; and postsecondary institutions.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (A)(3)**

The applicant demonstrates a current organizational structure that incorporates state statutes designed to integrate governance structures, align programs and ensure accountability. The plan, which builds on this work, outlined in the proposal will eliminate duplication of services and reduce administrative work, and will channel resources into direct service. This component of the application indicates that the applicant is building on past successes and also considering future needs and resources. The applicant outlines a plan to gather information from stakeholders in various parts of the state and tailor programming to meet those specific needs. The applicant identifies a need to integrate the four current systems of home visiting services into one unified system. Responsibility for coordination of the grant is clearly articulated: the Department of Human Services, designated as the Lead Agency, and the Early Childhood System Director are part of the governance organization system that is provided in the application. Listings of governance-related roles and responsibilities, along with Memorandums of Agreement, provide strong evidence of the applicant's plan to complete the scope of work in an effective and efficient manner. Planned work to eliminate multiple boards and commissions that currently oversee ELD programs will strengthen the state's system and provide more efficient and equitable services to children with High Needs. Memorandums of agreement and strong letters of support provided in the application provide further support for the applicant's proposed plan. The MOUs address key stakeholders and clearly articulate responsibilities. Letters of support indicate willingness by key stakeholders to work cooperatively to provide high quality, well-coordinated services to young children, including children with high need, and their families. One specific project, 'Consumer education' will help the state to provide services that are 'family friendly'. The transparency of service delivery and monitoring will help to ensure that a variety of stakeholders, including parents, will be included in planning and implementation activities. Inequities or other problems with service delivery can be more quickly uncovered and therefore addressed, when consumers are more educated. This is a high quality response that is partially implemented.

	Available	Score
<b>(A)(4) Developing a budget to implement and sustain the work of this grant.</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>
The extent to which the State Plan--		
(a) Demonstrates how the State will use existing funds that support early learning and development from Federal, State, private, and local sources (e.g., CCDF; Title I and II of ESEA; IDEA; Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program; State preschool; Head Start Collaboration and State Advisory Council funding; Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program; Title V MCH Block Grant; TANF; Medicaid; child welfare services under Title IV (B) and (E) of the Social Security Act; Statewide Longitudinal Data System; foundation; other private funding sources) for activities and services that help achieve the		

outcomes in the State Plan, including how the quality set-asides in CCDF will be used;

(b) Describes, in both the budget tables and budget narratives, how the State will effectively and efficiently use funding from this grant to achieve the outcomes in the State Plan, in a manner that--

- (1) Is adequate to support the activities described in the State Plan;
- (2) Includes costs that are reasonable and necessary in relation to the objectives, design, and significance of the activities described in the State Plan and the number of children to be served; and
- (3) Details the amount of funds budgeted for Participating State Agencies, localities, Early Learning Intermediary Organizations, Participating Programs, or other partners, and the specific activities to be implemented with these funds consistent with the State Plan, and demonstrates that a significant amount of funding will be devoted to the local implementation of the State Plan; and

(c) Demonstrates that it can be sustained after the grant period ends to ensure that the number and percentage of Children with High Needs served by Early Learning and Development Programs in the State will be maintained or expanded.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

**Comments on (A)(4)**

The applicant provides strong evidence that funding issues have been and/or will be addressed to provide high quality services to young children and their families. Multiple federal funding sources will support ELD programs and the state has allocated substantial general fund state dollars to support ELD programs. The applicant indicates several successful grant endeavors that have built a foundation for the work that remains. In addition, letters of support indicate a willingness by a wide variety of supporters to apply for matching dollars. One goal of the grant is to merge, redesign or improve the coordination of several programs that currently provide services to young children, especially those with High Needs and their families, and budget allocations appear to be adequate to complete this work. Enhanced coordination will reduce duplication of services which allows more funding to be used for meeting the goals of the grant. The applicant indicates that over the past five years, private sector funds to support ELD have increased substantially. This is an indication of the state's commitment to ELD and is seen as a strength of the proposal. While key strategies for sustainability were included, a specific plan to implement those strategies is not outlined in the proposal. Clear evidence of the seven projects to be supported by grant funds is outlined; these projects are aligned with the scope of the work outlined. Sixteen funding sources, along with their contributions throughout the grant period are specified; these funds provide significant support and many will continue after the grant period so that grant work may be continued beyond the grant period. The table indicating financial commitments of multiple agencies does not indicate budget increases for the duration of the grant period. This is a conservative estimate that is based on the most recent revenue forecast by the state's Office of Economic Analysis. Budget numbers for personnel and their related expenses appear to be sufficient. The state has opted to provide increased training stipends for grant years two and three; this indicates a plan to prepare training in year one and provide the bulk of the training in the next two years. In addition, upgrading the TORIS is a goal of the grant and substantial funds have been allocated for that task. The upgraded system will enhance service delivery and provide incentives for service providers. This expenditure is seen as an important way to improve services throughout the state.

**B. High-Quality, Accountable Programs**

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(1) Developing and adopting a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and adopted, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and adopt, a Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System that--

(a) Is based on a statewide set of tiered Program Standards that include--

- (1) Early Learning and Development Standards;
- (2) A Comprehensive Assessment System;
- (3) Early Childhood Educator qualifications;
- (4) Family engagement strategies;
- (5) Health promotion practices; and
- (6) Effective data practices;

(b) Is clear and has standards that are measurable, meaningfully differentiate program quality levels, and reflect high expectations of program excellence commensurate with nationally recognized standards that lead to improved learning outcomes for children; and

(c) Is linked to the State licensing system for Early Learning and Development Programs,

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (B)(1)**

The applicant indicates a clear progression toward higher standards that integrate essential components of a high-quality ELDP. The state Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS) will be expanded to include the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the curriculum framework for the EDLP. Top-tier ELDP's will be required to assess child learning needs using a statewide identified developmental screening tool. Of concern is the applicant's failure to address child assessment beyond the screening level. The applicant states that programs will be required to (a) individualize lesson planning, and (b) participate in environmental program assessments and CLASS observations, but does not identify methods, strategies or tools beyond the screening level to address child development. Additionally, the proposal states that licensing requirements include (a) the establishment of specific strategies to engage families and (b) having a family centered philosophy but specific measurement of these elements is not addressed. Early Childhood educator qualifications are addressed. The applicant's TQRIS requires more substantial training to reach higher levels, which will help to ensure that programs at higher levels are qualitatively better than programs at lower ratings. This work has already begun and a plan to continue to encourage programs to reach higher TQRIS is well-articulated in the proposal. Family engagement strategies and health promotion practices are addressed. The applicant states that ELDP's are required to have a family centered philosophy, but does not explain how the philosophy is demonstrated. All licensed programs must follow basic health and safety requirements, higher tier programs expand on these basic expectations. The applicant articulates current work to refine and improve the system; additionally, the applicant links data practices that support the decisions that have been made. The standards identified are measurable. Increasing the TQRIS system from a three-star to a five-star system will help to both meaningfully differentiate programs and to provide incentives to encourage upward mobility within the TQRIS. Increased differentiation will help families make choices about programming. State licensing is addressed in the proposal; the applicant addresses non-licensed programs and provides information about moving currently unlicensed Head Start programs and illegal programs into compliance. The applicant provides a clear and comprehensive plan, outlined by annual quarters, to move the state forward in the TQRIS process. This is a medium quality response with substantial implementation.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(2) Promoting participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</b>	15	9

The extent to which the State has maximized, or has a High-Quality Plan to maximize, program participation in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Implementing effective policies and practices to reach the goal of having all publicly funded Early Learning and Development Programs participate in such a system, including programs in each of the following categories--

- (1) State-funded preschool programs;
- (2) Early Head Start and Head Start programs;
- (3) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under section 619 of part B of IDEA and part C of IDEA;
- (4) Early Learning and Development Programs funded under Title I of the ESEA; and
- (5) Early Learning and Development Programs receiving funds from the State's CCDF program;

(b) Implementing effective policies and practices designed to help more families afford high-quality child care and maintain the supply of high-quality child care in areas with high concentrations of Children with High Needs (e.g., maintaining or increasing subsidy reimbursement rates, taking actions to ensure affordable co-payments, providing incentives to high-quality providers to participate in the subsidy program); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for the numbers and percentages of Early Learning and Development Programs that will participate in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by type of Early Learning and Development Program (as listed in (B)(2)(a)(1) through (5) above).

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (B)(2)**

The applicant outlines two specific strategies to maximize program participation in TQRIS. First, the Quality Indicators Project will be implemented statewide and Head Start Performance Standards will be aligned. Both of these actions will enhance the state's ability to provide services to children with High Needs in a coordinated and streamlined manner, but Title 1 and ELDs receiving funds from the state's CCDF program are not included. A wide variety of ELD programs will be included in the upgraded TQRIS system including Head Start, which provides services for young children with High Need, and as such, is an important target population. Further work is proposed to explore other opportunities to align programs funded by both Part B and Part C of IDEA; specific activities to include programs serving children with disabilities are not delineated. Children with disabilities and delays are served in these programs and are an important link to serving children with High Needs. Inclusion of these programs in the TQRIS will be another strength as the state strives to enhance services to young children while simultaneously streamlining the monitoring system. The applicant outlines a plan to implement a statewide TQRIS that focuses on the existing foundation of licensing, alignment of programs and monitoring. Again, an outline of work to be completed, along with the lead agency designation and financial resource allotment, is



articulated for the duration of the grant work. Children with High Need are included in the plan. Scholarship and education awards will be offered and training and technical assistance will be offered throughout the state; these incentives are seen to be an effective way to encourage service providers to participate in the system. The state has a history of investments to help families afford quality child care. A system was crafted by the Commission for Child Care to address ways to support the dual goals of family self-sufficiency and preparing children for success. Currently, families living at 185% (or less) of the federal poverty guidelines are eligible for subsidies. The subsidies also address low income families who have children with disabilities who may have to pay more for child care because of their child's need. The state has spent nearly \$40 million in improvements, which is a strong indication of their commitment to assuring that all children have high quality child care. Ambitious, yet achievable goals have been set for this work. The state expects that 100% of all state funded, Early Head Start and Head Start programs will be aligned by the end of the grant period. Fifty percent and 44%, respectively of the programs funded under Title 1 of the ESEA and Programs receiving CCDF funds are expected to participate by the end of the grant period. Seventeen percent of the Part B and Part C programs are expected to be participants. These are ambitious goals, and yet are realistic – programs under IDEA are structured in a way that will be a challenge to align, yet it is an admirable goal to include them in the system so that children and families who are being served in them have the same high quality services as other children. This is a medium quality response that is partially implemented.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(3) Rating and monitoring Early Learning and Development Programs</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for rating and monitoring the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Using a valid and reliable tool for monitoring such programs, having trained monitors whose ratings have an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability, and monitoring and rating the Early Learning and Development Programs with appropriate frequency; and

(b) Providing quality rating and licensing information to parents with children enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs (e.g., displaying quality rating information at the program site) and making program quality rating data, information, and licensing history (including any health and safety violations) publicly available in formats that are easy to understand and use for decision making by families selecting Early Learning and Development Programs and families whose children are enrolled in such programs.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

#### Comments on (B)(3)

The applicant provides information regarding the extent to which ELDP are monitored and rated in their current system and elaborates on the plan to enhance the system. With a commitment to high quality data, the applicant has chosen the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), which is a valid and reliable measure that focuses on positive adult-child interactions that promote positive child outcomes. In addition, to move beyond the first TQRIS tier, ELDPs must submit portfolios that will be screened by teams of educational specialists who have been trained and who have successfully met inter-rater reliability standards. The quality of the data is important to the face validity of the process and clear procedures to ensure inter-rater reliability are not provided. Especially for a process that includes rating portfolios, this can be problematic. The applicant outlines a plan by which quality rating and licensing information will be readily available for parents to assist them in choosing an ELDP that best meets their needs. This work will particularly target specific sub-populations of children who are considered high risk, families of children who are English Language Learners, families living on Indian Lands and rural families. The information will be structured in a way that will be easily accessed and understood by parents so that they can use the information to choose appropriate programs for their children. This is a high quality response with partial implementation.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(4) Promoting access to high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>

The extent to which the State and its Participating State Agencies have developed and implemented, or have a High-Quality Plan to develop and implement, a system for improving the quality of the Early Learning and Development Programs participating in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System by--

(a) Developing and implementing policies and practices that provide support and incentives for Early Learning and Development Programs to continuously improve (e.g., through training, technical assistance, financial rewards or incentives, higher subsidy reimbursement rates, compensation);

(b) Providing supports to help working families who have Children with High Needs access high-quality Early Learning and Development Programs that meet those needs (e.g., providing full-day, full-year programs, transportation, meals; family support services); and

(c) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for increasing--

(1) The number of Early Learning and Development Programs in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and

Improvement System; and

(2) The number and percentage of Children with High Needs who are enrolled in Early Learning and Development Programs that are in the top tiers of the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (B)(4)**

The applicant describes the current TQRIS and describes the core values of efficiency and sustainability, which are supported by evidence in other areas of the application. The applicant appears to have a system in place that meets some, but not all of the needs of ELD programs. Specifically, the applicant indicates a need to focus on providing support to promote professionals' advancement up the lattice. The applicant provides information that focuses on support for programs that provide services for children with High Need and will help their families access ELD programs that meet their needs, but does not include specific activities that address this goal. A coaching model of support, along with incentives, will be implemented and overseen by the Early Learning Council, which will be well-positioned to provide the necessary supports. The applicant plans to address the needs of families who work non-traditional shifts and in jobs that have unpredictable schedules, children of migrant families and children whose parents are receiving treatment for alcohol and/or drug addiction. The state provided training to unlicensed care providers who often provide care for children in these difficult circumstances. Unlicensed care providers continue to be required to participate in this training, which is provided to them at no cost. This is evidence of the state's willingness to address the needs of families who otherwise may not have access to services, especially high quality services. The goals outlined will enhance and expand both policies and practices, and they will provide support for working families. Also included are a reasonable timeline and an indication of adequate financial resources to complete the work. In addition, letters of support indicate private investments to further support this goal. The applicant indicates a commitment to targeting ELD programs that serve children at high risk by providing support and incentives for those programs to move up the lattice into higher TQRIS tiers. The applicant anticipates significant growth in the first few years of grant funding by targeting and supporting Head Start/PreK programs. Head Start programs in the state receive part of their funding from the state's general fund, which will make their upward mobility more likely. As Head Start serves children with High Needs, specifically children living in poverty, this support will make a significant impact on the number of High Needs children who are being served in top-tier programs. Further, the applicant indicates a commitment to increase the number and percentage of children with High Needs in top tiered ELDP. Performance measures of EDLP in top tiers of the TQRIS are provided with baseline and target numbers for the duration of the grant period. These measures represent challenging but achievable goals. This is a high quality response that is substantially implemented.

	Available	Score
<b>(B)(5) Validating the effectiveness of the State Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System.</b>	15	15

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to design and implement evaluations--working with an independent evaluator and, when warranted, as part of a cross-State evaluation consortium--of the relationship between the ratings generated by the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System and the learning outcomes of children served by the State's Early Learning and Development Programs by--

(a) Validating, using research-based measures, as described in the State Plan (which also describes the criteria that the State used or will use to determine those measures), whether the tiers in the State's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System accurately reflect differential levels of program quality; and

(b) Assessing, using appropriate research designs and measures of progress (as identified in the State Plan), the extent to which changes in quality ratings are related to progress in children's learning, development, and school readiness.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality**

**Comments on (B)(5)**

The applicant outlines their high-quality plan to evaluate the relationship between the TQRIS ratings of specific programs and child outcomes. Their plan will build on their current model of evaluation and improvement to continue to enhance their TQRIS. The TQRIS will be validated against ECERS and FCERS (both instruments that have high validity scores). High validation scores will indicate whether or not the TQRIS is a good measure of the relationship between a child's enrollment in a high quality program and his or her subsequent developmental outcomes. This will allow use of the TQRIS rating system to serve as an indicator of child outcomes. This assessment is planned using a stratified, random sample of ELD programs, which is an appropriate research design. A commitment to transparency of data is important and valuable so that the state can continue to fund programs that are working well and can change those that are not. As with information in previous sections, a timeline of work is provided and it supports the completion of ambitious yet achievable goals for improvement of the system for the benefit of young children.

**Focused Investment Areas (C), (D), and (E)**

Each State must address in its application--

- (1) Two or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (C);
- (2) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (D); and
- (3) One or more of the selection criteria in Focused Investment Area (E)

The total available points for each Focused Investment Area will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address in that area, so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points

**C. Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children**

The total available points that an applicant may receive for selection criteria (C)(1) through (C)(4) is 60. The 60 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address all four selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 15 points. If the applicant chooses to address two selection criteria, each criterion will be worth up to 30 points.

The applicant must address at least two of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (C), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
<b>(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>26</b>
<p>The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to put in place high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards that are used statewide by Early Learning and Development Programs and that--</p> <p>(a) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate across each age group of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, and that they cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness;</p> <p>(b) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are aligned with the State's K-3 academic standards in, at a minimum, early literacy and mathematics;</p> <p>(c) Includes evidence that the Early Learning and Development Standards are incorporated in Program Standards, curricula and activities, Comprehensive Assessment Systems, the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and professional development activities; and</p> <p>(d) The State has supports in place to promote understanding of and commitment to the Early Learning and Development Standards across Early Learning and Development Programs.</p> <p>Scoring Rubric Used: <b>Quality and Implementation</b></p> <p><b>Comments on (C)(1)</b></p> <p>The applicant discusses the Early Learning and Development Standards, which are the common set of standards for all Pre-K programs in the state. They are coordinated with both the Oregon Kindergarten Foundation and the early childhood Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, thus ensuring a common understanding among partners. Further work to revise the Birth to Three portion of the standards (if necessary) is planned. The framework will be adopted for Head Start programs, further ensuring that children with High Needs served in that program will receive equivalent high-quality programming. The applicant employs Early Learning and Development Standards for children ages birth to five; these standards include children with High Needs including English language learners, children with special health care needs, children with disabilities and children who are typically developing. These standards focus on both environments and experiences and focus on play-based activities and routines. The standards are research-based, reflect current best practice, are available in Spanish and are appropriate for all ELD programs. These assurances reflect the applicant's commitment to provide high quality programming for all young children. The system further links child outcomes, workforce standards and program standards across developmental domains and with parent/family concerns. Standards are developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate and address infants and toddlers as well as preschoolers. Further, the incorporation of evidence of effective use of standards will be incorporated into the comprehensive assessment system and the workforce knowledge and competency framework. Cross-linking these systems is an effective way to promote the use of the system throughout the ELDP system. An appropriate timeline for implementation activities is provided, however, specific strategies to lead to this implementation are not specified. This is a high quality response that is substantially implemented.</p>		
<b>(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>29</b>

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to identify and address the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs by--

(a) Establishing a progression of standards for ensuring children's health and safety; ensuring that health and behavioral screening and follow-up occur; and promoting children's physical, social, and emotional development across the levels of its Program Standards;

(b) Increasing the number of Early Childhood Educators who are trained and supported on an on-going basis in meeting the health standards;

(c) Promoting healthy eating habits, improving nutrition, expanding physical activity; and

(d) Leveraging existing resources to meet ambitious yet achievable annual targets to increase the number of Children with High Needs who--

(1) Are screened using Screening Measures that align with the Medicaid Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment benefit (see section 1905(r)(5) of the Social Security Act) or the well-baby and well-child services available through the Children's Health Insurance Program (42 CFR 457.520), and that, as appropriate, are consistent with the Child Find provisions in IDEA (see sections 612(a)(3) and 635(a)(5) of IDEA);

(2) Are referred for services based on the results of those screenings, and where appropriate, received follow-up; and

(3) Participate in ongoing health care as part of a schedule of well-child care, including the number of children who are up to date in a schedule of well-child care.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (C)(3)**

The applicant identifies a clear progression of standards that address (a) children's health and safety needs in a wide variety of settings, (b) health and behavioral screening and follow up by appropriate professionals and (c) promoting children's physical, social and emotional health. These standards address all key areas of PreK development that impact school readiness. Three practice tiers are currently in place and are being integrated into the state's Medicaid managed care and reimbursement system, thus ensuring that the practices will be continued after the grant period has ended. There is clear, appropriate integration between the curriculum and the TQRIS system. The state system has, and will continue, to leverage resources to achieve this goal, which is high quality and achievable. Two governors and the state legislature have provided support for this work for many years so state tax dollars have been used to get the state this far in the process. In addition, several grants to support work related to (a) training professionals to be aware of services that are available, and (b) training professionals to recognize needs and do screenings are providing support for this work. Other work, such as participation in ABCDIII, SCHIP and EPSDT will also provide opportunities for providers to work collaboratively and will support care providers to 'buy in' to the system. The applicant addresses the need for a wide variety of professionals to be well trained and to 'buy in' to the system to provide access to the system for all Preschool-age children, including those with High Needs. Home visitors and nurses will be trained to recognize developmental challenges and make appropriate referrals. This is a key step to address the needs of young children, particularly those with High Needs. Programs with a focus on health, behavior and child development are included; this will enhance the probability that a child with a developmental, behavior or health need will be identified early and his or her specific needs will be addressed via appropriate referrals. A clear plan that hinges on consensus building is provided in the scope of work outlined in the proposal. As with other areas of this application, parents' knowledge of and participation in the system is highlighted. These activities are key to meet the many and varied needs of young children, particularly those with high needs. A timeline with key tasks is provided and adequate financial resources are provided. Existing resources to be leveraged for this work include funds from other Medicaid-SCHIP, EPSDT, ABCDIII and other agencies and grants. This combination of funding streams is necessary and adequate to meet requirements for screening and referral and to participate in ongoing health care that is important to screening of and programming for all children, especially those with high needs. This is a high quality response that is substantially implemented.

**D. A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce**

The total points that a State may earn for selection criteria (D)(1) and (D)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (D), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
(D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.	20	18



The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to--

- (a) Develop a common, statewide Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework designed to promote children's learning and development and improve child outcomes;
- (b) Develop a common, statewide progression of credentials and degrees aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and
- (c) Engage postsecondary institutions and other professional development providers in aligning professional development opportunities with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (D)(1)**

The applicant provides evidence of a Workforce Knowledge and Competency framework that is already in place, and outlines work to be done to address cross-sector buy in and alignment. A variety of mechanisms to document training and/or education and show achievement are delineated. Of note is the credential for infant toddler professionals and directors of early childhood centers; offering these credentials demonstrates the state's awareness of and interest in supporting all ELD programs and the professionals who staff them. Especially for children with High Needs both high quality services delivered as early as possible and services by credentialed providers is critical. The credentials for infant toddler professionals and directors will help to ensure this. State standards for the Core Body of Knowledge is divided into 10 core knowledge categories that have been chosen to support children's development. The state standards also form the foundation of the career lattice for professionals. Linking the two systems together reinforces the importance of each and enhances the quality of services provided to all children in ELD's. Training will be aligned with the Core Body of Knowledge (CBK) standards that are already in place. The CBK includes a wide variety of categories including, but not limited to, diversity, human growth and development, special needs and understanding and guiding behavior. These are important areas of knowledge for early childhood professionals and will strengthen the state's system. An effort to increase the number of highly trained early childhood professionals, especially those who are likely to work with children with High Needs and their families is outlined. Community college programs and trainers in the state's registry are closely aligned with the CBK. The application addresses articulation agreements among community colleges and from community colleges to four-year institutions, but does not specifically address the current integration of CBK into the curriculum of four-year institutions. Alignment activities are in the Implementation plan for years two and three of the grant. An appropriate timeline that outlines key events and supporting information is included. Overall, this is seen as a strength of this proposal. This is a high quality response that is substantially implemented.

	Available	Score
<b>(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to improve the effectiveness and retention of Early Childhood Educators who work with Children with High Needs, with the goal of improving child outcomes by--

- (a) Providing and expanding access to effective professional development opportunities that are aligned with the State's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework;
- (b) Implementing policies and incentives (e.g., scholarships, compensation and wage supplements, tiered reimbursement rates, other financial incentives, management opportunities) that promote professional improvement and career advancement along an articulated career pathway that is aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework, and that are designed to increase retention;
- (c) Publicly reporting aggregated data on Early Childhood Educator development, advancement, and retention; and
- (d) Setting ambitious yet achievable targets for--
  - (1) Increasing the number of postsecondary institutions and professional development providers with programs that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and the number of Early Childhood Educators who receive credentials from postsecondary institutions and professional development providers that are aligned to the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework; and
  - (2) Increasing the number and percentage of Early Childhood Educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials that align with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (D)(2)**

The applicant outlines the current system of support for educators and provides solid evidence for the expansion and strengthening of this program. The current program includes a wide variety of training options for directors, professionals who work with infants and toddlers, early literacy, positive behavior supports and health care. Each of these elements is an important part of a high quality ELD system. A web-based training calendar is linked to the database that is used to track participation in training. Additional training will be developed with grant funds and incentives for completion – which is tied to progress up the career pathway – will be tracked and publicly reported. Scholarships have been offered through a community foundation and other financial incentives are provided to encourage movement up the career pathway. A plan to have all community colleges early childhood education training programs aligned with the Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework is described; all public-run universities will engage in articulation and alignment efforts. These are important steps to preparing a professionals to enter the workforce ready to address the needs of all children. The state's current system of reporting aggregated data has been based on voluntary data submission. An enhanced system is proposed that will track all ECE's professional development accomplishments over time. Data collected by the applicant indicates that 96% of scholarship participants plan to stay in the field of early childhood education for the next three years; this is clear evidence of the applicants' dedication to retain a high quality workforce. Work proposed in this section of the application is seen as supportive of this goal. Part of the state plan is to add coaching as follow-up training and this is seen as important way to help professionals integrate skills and knowledge into their daily interactions with children and families. Key goals, along with supporting activities, rationale, milestones and an indication of the lead agency and other agencies involved are outlined in a table and financial resources are included in the budget. These goals and activities support the ambitious, yet achievable goals to enhance work with post-secondary and professional development providers both the increase the number and percentage of educators who are progressing to higher levels of credentials and to help young children enter school ready to learn. This is a high quality response that is substantially implemented.

### E. Measuring Outcomes and Progress

The total points an applicant may earn for selection criteria (E)(1) and (E)(2) is 40. The 40 points will be divided by the number of selection criteria that the applicant chooses to address so that each selection criterion is worth the same number of points. For example, if the applicant chooses to address both selection criteria under this Focused Investment Area, each criterion will be worth up to 20 points. If the applicant chooses to address one selection criterion, the criterion will be worth up to 40 points.

The applicant must address at least one of the selection criteria within Focused Investment Area (E), which are as follows:

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.</b>	20	12
<p>The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to implement, independently or as part of a cross-State consortium, a common, statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment that informs instruction and services in the early elementary grades and that--</p> <p>(a) Is aligned with the State's Early Learning and Development Standards and covers all Essential Domains of School Readiness;</p> <p>(b) Is valid, reliable, and appropriate for the target population and for the purpose for which it will be used, including for English learners and children with disabilities;</p> <p>(c) Is administered beginning no later than the start of school year 2014-2015 to children entering a public school kindergarten; States may propose a phased implementation plan that forms the basis for broader statewide implementation;</p> <p>(d) Is reported to the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and to the early learning data system, if it is separate from the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, as permitted under and consistent with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws; and</p> <p>(e) Is funded, in significant part, with Federal or State resources other than those available under this grant, (e.g., with funds available under section 6111 or 6112 of the ESEA).</p>		

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

Comments on (E)(1)
<p>A high-quality plan to address Kindergarten Entry Assessment (KEA) is provided. Currently, the applicant state is not using a KEA; the application provides information regarding the KEA that was used in the past and described issues with the use of that instrument. An advisory committee will work to choose a new instrument that will meet the needs identified by the state, and will be in place no later than the start of the 2014-2015 school year, as outlined in the grant application. The proposal addresses the need to choose a KEA that is aligned with the state's Early Learning and Development Standards and to cover all Essential Domains of School Readiness. The committee will also choose an instrument that will provide kindergarten teachers with information that will help with planning and delivering instruction. The tool, which will be valid, reliable and appropriate for the target population will be ready for implementation within the mandated timeline. The instrument will also be aligned to the existing state data collection system. Funding for this project is provided, in part, by a foundation. A table outlining key activities, timelines and outcomes provides strong evidence that important steps in the process of choosing and implementing an appropriate KEA will be completed in an efficient, timely manner. This is a high quality response</p>

that is minimally implemented.

	Available	Score
<b>(E)(2) Building or enhancing an early learning data system to improve instruction, practices, services, and policies.</b>	20	15

The extent to which the State has a High-Quality Plan to enhance the State's existing Statewide Longitudinal Data System or to build or enhance a separate, coordinated, early learning data system that aligns and is interoperable with the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and that either data system--

- (a) Has all of the Essential Data Elements;
- (b) Enables uniform data collection and easy entry of the Essential Data Elements by Participating State Agencies and Participating Programs;
- (c) Facilitates the exchange of data among Participating State Agencies by using standard data structures, data formats, and data definitions such as Common Education Data Standards to ensure interoperability among the various levels and types of data;
- (d) Generates information that is timely, relevant, accessible, and easy for Early Learning and Development Programs and Early Childhood Educators to use for continuous improvement and decision making; and
- (e) Meets the Data System Oversight Requirements and complies with the requirements of Federal, State, and local privacy laws.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (E)(2)**

The early learning data system outlined in the proposal is aligned with the TQRIS program that is highlighted throughout the proposal. Clear evidence is provided of the state's plan to enhance the current system to include all the essential data elements enable uniform data collection and sharing of information across agencies, therefore decreasing duplication of work, while ensuring that all pertinent privacy laws are followed. Previous work was done with funding obtained through federal grants indicating the state's capacity to work in an effective, timely manner. The data system is web-based which enables users to access it in a timely and relevant manner. In this way, data can be used to inform continuous improvement and decision making by stakeholders such as licensing specialists and TQRIS coaches. It also addresses all necessary elements. The integration of systems as outlined in the application will enhance the state's capacity to provide high quality services to young children and their families and will be useful for teachers as they plan and provide instruction and the state to improve statewide implementation. Further evidence indicates the applicant's plan to continue this work in a manner that supports the state's continued work to collect and use high quality data. This is a high quality response with partial implementation.

	Available	Score
<b>Total Points Available for Selection Criteria</b>	280	237

**Priorities**

Competitive Preference Priorities

	Available	Score
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 2: Including all Early Learning and Development Programs in the Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System</b>	10	8

Competitive Preference Priority 2 is designed to increase the number of children from birth to kindergarten entry who are participating in programs that are governed by the State's licensing system and quality standards, with the goal that all licensed or State-regulated programs will participate. The State will receive points for this priority based on the extent to which the State has in place, or has a High-Quality Plan to implement no later than June 30, 2015--

- (a) A licensing and inspection system that covers all programs that are not otherwise regulated by the State and that regularly care for two or more unrelated children for a fee in a provider setting; provided that if the State exempts programs for reasons other than the number of children cared for, the State may exclude those entities and reviewers will score this priority only on the basis of non-excluded entities; and
- (b) A Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System in which all licensed or State-regulated Early Learning and Development Programs participate.

Scoring Rubric Used: **Quality and Implementation**

**Comments on (P)(2)**

The applicant is well-positioned to continue work to increase the number of children in the state who participate in programs that are licensed by the state. The work outlined throughout the grant proposal is well-designed and will enhance the current system. A comprehensive plan to continue the work to address the needs of all stakeholders, including parents, is provided. The current licensing and inspection system will be updated to provide more comprehensive coverage and will be included in the TQRIS. The state is one of two that participates in the Federal Learning Laboratory Project with Head Start and the Office of Child Care. Their state team is currently working on areas in which the state can align monitoring systems. In addition, the state will begin a broad revision of licensed child care rules in 2012. These works-in-progress, along with alignment of the TQRIS will enhance the state's Longitudinal Data System. This is a high quality plan with partial implementation.

Priorities

	Available	Yes/No
<b>Competitive Preference Priority 3: Understanding the Status of Children's Learning and Development at Kindergarten Entry</b>	<b>0 or 10</b>	<b>No</b>

To meet this priority, the State must, in its application--

- (a) Demonstrate that it has already implemented a Kindergarten Entry Assessment that meets selection criterion (E)(1) by indicating that all elements in Status Table (A)(1)-12 are met; or
- (b) Address selection criterion (E)(1) and earn a score of at least 70 percent of the maximum points available for that criterion.

**Comments on (P)(3)**

The state does not have a currently implemented KEA so the proposal does not meet the criteria outlined in (a). Additionally, the proposal earned fewer than 70 percent of the maximum points available for (E)(1).

Absolute Priority

	Met? Yes/No
<b>Absolute Priority - Promoting School Readiness for Children with High Needs.</b>	<b>Yes</b>

To meet this priority, the State's application must comprehensively and coherently address how the State will build a system that increases the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs for Children with High Needs so that they enter kindergarten ready to succeed.

The State's application must demonstrate how it will improve the quality of Early Learning and Development Programs by integrating and aligning resources and policies across Participating State Agencies and by designing and implementing a common, statewide Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System. In addition, to achieve the necessary reforms, the State must make strategic improvements in those specific reform areas that will most significantly improve program quality and outcomes for Children with High Needs. Therefore, the State must address those criteria from within each of the Focused Investment Areas (sections (C) Promoting Early Learning and Development Outcomes for Children, (D) A Great Early Childhood Education Workforce, and (E) Measuring Outcomes and Progress) that it believes will best prepare its Children with High Needs for kindergarten success.

**Comments on Absolute Priority**

This application provides strong, comprehensive evidence of previous and current work toward improving the quality of ELDP and outlines work to be done to further enhance these services. Clear budgetary support for these strategic improvements is provided for all key elements of this work. Robust evidence for promoting learning and development for children, including children with High Needs, in a wide variety of developmental areas and through a broad array of modes of delivery is provided. Workforce development is clearly articulated and addresses key areas of need. Outcomes and progress for both child and adult outcomes are well-articulated. The proposal provides convincing evidence of a plan to prepare all children, including children with High Needs, for success in kindergarten and beyond.